

ARCTURUS.

No. X.

The Career

OF

PUFFER HOPKINS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE MOTLEY BOOK."

CHAPTER VII.

PUFFER HOPKINS RECEIVES AN APPOINTMENT.

TOWARD the close of an afternoon, a few days after the visit of Puffer Hopkins to the auction-room, a deformed little personage was strolling through the street, with his arms nearly to his elbows in his breeches-pockets, his head thrown back a trifle, and his eyes turned up as if he were in the very depths and profundities of a cogitation of some consequence: in short, it was our gentleman of the Bottom Club, who practiced upon certain pockets, as has been seen, on a former occasion.

"Three pair of fowls at three shillings, makes nine," said the little gentleman, "the old red rooster at five shillings—though his liver's disordered, for I smelt his breath this morn-

ing—fourteen. That's for after-breakfast work. Then before, there's twenty pound of hoop, twopence a pound, and a sheet of copper, seven pound, at five pence—thirty-five and forty; as good as seventy-five: and all the afternoon for a holiday, to find out where this Puffer Hopkins lives, and to hatch out an acquaintance with him. There's something brewing in the wind 'twixt him and that shabby old lunatic, Hobbleshank: something going on that ought to be put a stop to; and as the Wice Chance-seller of Law wo'n't interfere to separate such good friends, we'll see what Mr. Small, Ish Small, of Pell street or thereabouts, can do." He walked a few paces further, and again broke out, "Let me catch that old fellow trying any of his tricks on uncle Close, as he did ten year ago, when he pitched his family watch at my crown, and we'll see if there an't a spice of sport from it. Strike up, old 'un, I'm here!"

Saying this, he trotted down the street, turned into a by-way, crossed that at a good pace, and speedily reached a corner building, from which a great striped flag was waving and a tumult of voices issuing. Into this he made his way, selected a suitable position, and at the proper moment, (a great deal of the same sort of business going on at the time), he called out the name of Puffer Hopkins, which was duly entered by one of the clerks of the meeting upon a roll, and the agile little performer, thereupon, departed.

This time he selected a different course, striking straight towards the heart of the city, for several blocks, and emerging upon an open square. He now looked about him for several minutes, indulging in a severe scrutiny of the neighboring buildings, and at length fixed his eye upon a dingy, yellow house, which stood facing the square and forming the fork or extreme point of two streets.

"I think I should know the house by the description," he said, measuring it again with his eye, from top to bottom, "it is n't quite a palace, that's clear: I don't believe the Grand Signior lives here, nor his Highness the chief of the Seneca tribes. There's considerable poverty written in dirty paint all about the front; and, judging by the windows, I guess it's had a hard fight with the brick-front across the way, and got an eye or two put out." At this moment, the light of a lamp fell from a window of the upper story, and Mr. Small, turning his face up towards it, exclaimed, "His light, by all that shines! It an't a astral, anyhow! He's studying a speech,

or mixing a dose of resolutions, now—and I 'll step in and surprise him ! I 've no doubt the stairs will hold out till I get up and down, although they look as if they was on their last legs.”

Climbing a narrow and ill-arranged way, he attained the topmost landing, where he stood for some time, in doubt which door, of the many that presented themselves, to select ; when turning suddenly, as he heard some one ascending the stairs, he stumbled, and falling against a door, dashed it open and landed in the very centre of a room. It would be perhaps a sufficient description of this apartment to say, that it was hardly large enough to fight a boxing-match in, with the attendant spectators ; that besides the person of Puffer Hopkins, it held the heads of Demosthenes and John Randolph, a solitary chair, a small auction-bought desk, and a long fragment of looking-glass established in one corner.

“ Your humble servant, sir ; your most obedient ! I thought I 'd just stop as I was passing, and tell you, you are a regularly elected member of the Vig'lance Committee of this Ward !” said the visitor, grasping his cap in both hands, assuming a countenance of great simplicity and innocence, and travestying a bow, a good deal in the style of a theatrical waiter, retiring.

“ By whose goodness is this ?” asked Hopkins, eagerly.

“ Mine, for lack of a better, sir :—I thought it would be a little sort of a treat, now that strawberries are out of season !” answered the little gentleman, licking his lips.

“ Yours, sir ?” exclaimed Puffer, seizing him by the hand ; “ I owe you a debt of gratitude for life for this. Do n't I know you, sir ? you are a member of the Club, I believe ; the memorable, and immortal Club—the Bottom, I mean ?”

Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he ran on in a very fluent and enthusiastic style, pronouncing his introduction to the Bottom Club one of the most fortunate incidents of his life ; his acquaintance with the gentleman before him as one of the greatest pleasures he had ever known ; said that he was attached to his party and his principles, no man more ; and that he was resolved to perform his duty as a member of the Vigilance Committee with the utmost zeal, promptitude and dispatch.

The stranger, although a small man, was not a little astonished at this tide of eloquence, (for Puffer Hopkins was in the middle of a declamation to his looking-glass on some suppo-

sed festive occasion when the visitor had broken in, and which declamation, in the flutter of the interruption, he applied to his unexpected advent): we say he was not a little surprised, but it was with main effort he subdued his mirth, when, at the end of all these elegant promises and professions, Puffer Hopkins asked him "What he had to do?"

Now, there are many things that a member of a Vigilance Committee, giving a liberal construction to the designation, might be supposed to be engaged in with great propriety. Possessing the sharp eye that of right belongs to a functionary so entitled, he should pierce into the heart of hidden abuses—following them with close, wary steps, into obscure dens and haunts—getting at awful secrets of crime, veiled from all other eyes—detecting, through the world, in their thousand disguises and hypocritical mantles, fraud, cruelty, domestic wrong, and the whole brood of cozenage and knavery.

It is pretty clear that it was to none of these varieties of service that Puffer Hopkins was expected to devote his very promising talents: and of this Puffer himself had some faint conception—for when he puzzled his brain in search of the duties of his new character, it did not occur to him that it had ever been the business of any politician, past or present, or would be in all future time, to subserve in any possible way the plain, simple, every-day interests of humanity.

At this question, Mr. Small laughed; not, however, as if any circumstance of the present interview, or relating thereto, had struck him as at all humorous, but as if his thoughts were fixed upon some remote incident, away off a good many miles, and arising from such innocent sources as might be supposed to move the mirth of so simple-minded a gentleman. Laugh he did, however, with such violence as to compel him to place a hand upon one of his ribs, while he planted his elbow against the wall to support the other.

From all which, it might be presumed that the little gentleman thought it quite a diverting question to be asked, What the members of a Vigilance Committee had to do? Laughing, and still holding his sides, the dwarf gentleman again burlesqued a bow and hurried from the apartment: leaving Mr. Puffer Hopkins in a state of no little wonder and bewilderment.

Determined, nevertheless, to acquire a more definite knowledge of the functions and duties of this majestic office, Puffer snatched up his hat, shifted himself into a bright blue coat

with intense brass buttons, and went forth. In the excitement and anxiety of mind resulting from the sudden knowledge of his appointment, he had enjoyed a brisk walk of two squares or more before it occurred to him that it would greatly further his inquiries if he would take a minute or two to consider where they should be made.

After many misgivings and fluctuations of opinion, he at length fixed on Mr. Fishblatt, and, for a variety of reasons, selected that gentleman as an adviser in his present emergency: to whose residence he turned his steps with all becoming expedition. Glancing about for an overgrown door-plate and a red front surmounted with gigantic chimney-pots, Puffer was not long in discovering the domicile of which he was in search; which domicile was, however, adorned, beyond the description of Mr. Fishblatt, by an oblong sign stretched across the entire front, and cutting the house unpleasantly into halves, indicating that the safe, cheap and accommodating corporation of the Phoenix Fire Insurance Company harbored within.

Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, therefore, inhabited a second floor; and after a due performance on a door-bell, and ringing all the customary changes, Puffer was led by a frouzy-haired servant girl through the hall, up one flight of stairs and into a small supplemental building, in a small room whereof—comprehending the entire breadth and length of the same—he came upon Mr. Fishblatt, seated grandly in a very high-backed chair—holding in his outstretched arms an enormous newspaper, on which his eyes were fixed as keenly and comprehensively as if he expected by the perusal of the sheet before him at that very time and the mastery of its contents, to become one of the finest scholars and profoundest critics in the country. He was assisted in the achievement of this mighty purpose, if he entertained it, by a gorgeous spirit-lamp which was fed by a ball, and blazed away on a table at his side, like a meteor.

On the entrance of Puffer Hopkins, the reader sprang to his feet, cast down the paper, and rushing anxiously towards his visiter, fixed upon his right hand with the tenacity of a griffin. "My dear fellow," cried Mr. Fishblatt, earnestly, "I'm glad to see you. Down with your hat. Make yourself at home: this looks like home, does n't it? Every body thinks so that comes here. I do n't suppose you could find a snugger room of the kind in the whole planetary system:

you see how cosy and quiet it is; here are all my books around me—pamphlets, sermons, speeches, documents from Congress, documents from Legislatures, catalogues, tracts, and lexicons. Is n't it very nice?"

"I certainly think it is," answered Puffer, contemplating the questioner with considerable astonishment.

"There's something on your mind," continued Mr. Fishblatt, scarcely waiting an answer, "I know it: I see it plainly, something that harasses and worries you. You don't sleep, you can't rest, it troubles you so. Come, out with it, my boy; let's have it, at once. What is it that makes you look so anxious?"

"To tell the truth, I'm a member of the Vigilance Committee, and do n't know what my duties are," answered Puffer. "And I have taken the liberty to come and ask you what I am to do, in my new capacity?"

"If I was a member of a Vigilance Committee," said Mr. Fishblatt, regarding Puffer Hopkins with great gravity and steadiness, "I should consider it my duty to have immense telescopes constructed—and I would plant them, sir, where I could look into the very interior of every domicile in the ward, and know what was in every man's pot for dinner six days in the week. This may not be your view of duty, sir; but I should feel bound to have great ledgers kept—with leaves that opened like doors—and there write down every man's name in large letters: and I'd have a full length of him drawn on the margin, and colored to the life. I'd give his dress, sir, down to the vest buttons, and if there was a mote in his eye, I'd have it there to be cross examined, when he came up to vote. Now don't say you can't do this—you have n't the physical strength to keep such a set of books."

"Would you inquire so very particularly," asked Puffer, timidly—for he felt abashed by the grand conceptions of the imaginative Fishblatt—"into the private habits of voters?"

"I would, sir!" answered Mr. Fishblatt, peremptorily; "I'd know whether they slept in trundle-bedsteads or high-posts; whether they preferred cold-slaugh cut lengthwise or crosswise of the cabbage; whether their shoes were hob-nailed or pegged. Can you tell why I'd do this?"

Puffer Hopkins frankly and heroically confessed that he could not very readily, without the aid of Mr. Fishblatt.

"I knew you could n't," said that distinguished rhetorician. "Don't you see that the public conduct of the man is

foreshadowed in his personal habits? A man that wears red flannel shirts is always for war: a man that employs night-caps is opposed to riots. The voters that browbeat their servants at home, sir, always cry out for strengthening the Executive. Go into that man's house over the way, sir—the house with the meek, salmon-colored door:—that door is a hypocrite and deceiver, sir! Climb to the fourth shelf of his pantry, and you'll find two red-handled rawhides:—that man approves of despatching the Florida Indians by drugging their brandy with ratsbane. That man's on his knees every Sunday, in the Orthodox chapel—wears out a pair of knee cushions every year—and has breeches made without pockets, to escape the importunities of beggars in the streets and highways. Put him down in your journal, sir, as a knave, a villain, a low base fellow—will you?"

"The laws hardly reach such men," suggested Puffer.

"I'd make them reach," said Mr. Fishblatt, confidently, "I'd stretch 'em till they did reach. I'd hang such men higher than Haman: I'd invent every kind of rack and thumb-screw, and worry their lives out by inches: I'd fill their houses with bugs and alligators: they should have pirates to wait on them at table: and they should sleep with bandits swarming about their beds—great black-whiskered bandits—with pistols charged to the muzzle and always on the full cock. Would that serve them right?"

"I think it would—strictly speaking," answered Puffer; "But as member of a Vigilance Committee, should I undertake to spy out such abuses?"

"Oh, no: your business is—have I told you what your business is?—to go along the wharves, and up into alleys, and down into cellars, and inquire for voters—disseminating the right doctrine by the way, and making every body of your opinion, by having no opinion at all. Are you on the Dock Committee, or one of the Alley Committees?"

"Neither," answered the young politician; "I think mine is known as the Rear-Building section."

"Are you advised whether there are any old women there—to give iron spectacles to? or small children—to nurse with gingerbread? or any recent deaths in any of the families—that you may sympathize in the bereavement, by wearing a strip of crape on your hat?"

"I have no instructions," answered Puffer Hopkins.

"Then you had better go prepared for all emergencies—"

you had better carry a piece of calico under your arm, to cut into gowns; half a dozen papers of confectionary in your pockets; a gross of clay-pipes, for the superannuated voters or their aged relatives; a bale of corduroys; and, perhaps—I only suggest this—a basket of sheep's pluck."

"What is this last for?" asked Puffer, gaping with astonishment at the personal services required of him, as a member of the high and mighty Ward Vigilance Committee.

"To wheedle their dogs with," answered Mr. Fishblatt, "if they happen to keep any in the front yard."

Surprised and perplexed by the requisitions of the Vigilance branch of the service—as expounded by Mr. Halsey Fishblatt, the extraordinary fervor of whose fancy Puffer Hopkins had not yet quite learned to appreciate—he directed his steps towards his lodgings in the Fork, striving his best to project the means by which he should procure the articles enumerated, and the kind of conveyance by which they were to be transported to voters' houses.

As to the latter, his mind wavered between a porter's go-cart and a small boy, with broad shoulders,—and as to the first, he had not reached a conclusion when he reached home; where he was opportunely relieved from further perplexity for the present, by having a dirty billet placed in his hands, inviting him to a meeting of the very Vigilance Committee itself, at the Head Quarters, at half past seven that evening.

Disposing of a thrifty meal, consisting of two cheap slices of bread, a saucer of onions in vinegar, (an excellent thing for the voice), and a bowl of black tea, he whirled his hat half a dozen times about his left hand, applying to its nap, meantime, the sleeve of his right arm, buttoned his coat as smartly as he could, and leaving word that he had gone to a public meeting, the young politician put forth.

A few minutes' rapid walking—for he was behind his time—brought him to the room in which the Committee assembled, and halting for a moment for a general survey, he entered, and assumed his seat on a bench against the wall with his fellow-laborers, who were present in great force, looking as vigilant and shrewd-minded as their station required. A member was on his legs, expounding, in very animated and felicitous style, the glory to be reaped by any adventurous canvasser—who, in the service of his country and impelled by a desire to transmit a name to his children, should plunge down a certain cellar—which he described—and secure the

names of several desperate villains who there harbored with the intent of coming forth as voters at the spring election, and perjuring themselves in the very face and eye of heaven.

This gentleman was followed by a second, of equal power and comprehensiveness of vision, who declared, on his personal honor and well known character for integrity, that they might look out for a riot ; and one of a very serious cast. He had said serious cast, because the size of the clubs in preparation was unusual. He had a friend (thank Heaven!) whose confidence he believed he possessed. He was a turner : he had been secretly employed to furnish a gross of heavy bludgeons—in the disguise of balustrades. For this fact they might take his word. He did n't mention it to alarm any gentleman present. He did n't wish any gentleman to stay at home or to put himself at nurse on election day, to avoid anything unpleasant that might be abroad, in the shape of clubs or bludgeons. For his part, he had nothing to fear—he only wished to put gentlemen of the Committee on their guard, and to drive them to take into serious consideration the expediency of reviving the use of the ancient helmet.

These words had scarcely escaped him, when a pale young gentleman sprang up from a table at the corner of the room, and offered a resolution embodying the suggestions of his friend ; which was promptly seconded by a respectable and worthy tinker, across the room, who had a presentiment that the helmets in question must be made of sheet-iron quilted with tin—which would all fall in his line of trade. The resolution was, notwithstanding this able advocacy, doomed not to become an heroic determination of the Committee corporate, being extinguished and quenched forever by a flood of invective and ridicule issuing from a gentleman who condescended to perform journey-work in a hatter's establishment, and who properly enough regarded such an attempt as an invasion of the rights of the guild.

The early part of the evening proved, therefore, very tempestuous and windy ; but as soon as the various gusts of debate and declamation had blown over, a very plain-looking gentleman, at about ten o'clock, rose ; and beginning in a very soft voice, which seemed to grow softer as he advanced, proved himself to be a very sensible fellow, by calling the attention of the meeting to some little particulars which had been overlooked. These particulars consisted of the division and organization of the Committee into sections, enrolling

their names in a book, each section having its own head or chairman, and the allotment of their duties to the various members of the Committee.

There was the Dock Committee—they wanted a gentleman on that, who would n't feel the inconvenience of a tarpaulin hat, a wide-skirted shaggy box-coat with two sepulchral pockets, for his fists to be carried in, at the sides, and who could n't well live without a cigar. Then, they wanted a short man for cellars and areas : a thin man to go up the allies : a spruce-looking member to visit at the quality houses : a supple man, of an enterprising turn, for rear-building and garret service : and a jolly-looking portly dog to talk with the landlords and tavern-keepers.

The plain man described, in a few words and with becoming modesty, what he thought the duty of the members of the Vigilance Committee then and there assembled : they should be keen-eyed in discovering voters, artful and insinuating in approaching them, copious of tongue, subtle in argument, and prepared to clinch anything they might choose to assert.

He thought vilifying the opposition was n't bad, if it was done in a christian-like way—and by describing them as “some persons,” or, “there were people who he (the member) knew could n't bear the poor ; who would take the last potatoe out of a poor man's pot,” and similar fetches of expression.

When this gentleman had occupied the floor for about an hour, Puffer Hopkins very discreetly held himself to be as well advised as to the services required as he was ever likely to be ; and determining in his own mind not to be easily out-done, and to set about his portion of the task on the morrow, he departed.

CHAPTER VIII.

ADVENTURES OF PUFFER AS A SCOURER.

The sun had certainly made up his mind, that morning, not to see company ; and if all the Vigilance Committees in the seventeen wards had turned out expressly for that purpose, it would have been impossible for even their well-known and extraordinary astuteness to have detected the slightest glimpse

of his benevolent features anywhere in the very murkiest sky of a November day. The forty-five spirited fire-companies of the metropolis—who had seen proper, at a very early hour in the day, to take a run at a horse-shed near Bowling Green, which had extinguished itself the moment it was discovered nothing else could catch from it—might with equal propriety have turned in and staid at home, smoking long-nines and talking over past achievements: for the rain came down in torrents, and kept every combustible plank in the city as nice and moist as heart could wish.

Omnibus-drivers and hackmen carried a proud head, and looked down on the sinful world of dry-goods men and indoor trades-people, from their box seats, with an air of pleasant disdain; and the proprietors of livery-stables peered forth from their small office-windows, smiling and making themselves happy and comfortable at the prospect, as Noah might have done, on a similar occasion. Pedestrians with umbrellas looked melancholy, and buried themselves in their blue-cottons and brown-silks, to indicate their misanthropy; and pedestrians without umbrellas looked small and miserable, and making the most of their wrappers, hurried along, in a supreme unconsciousness of the inhabited character of any window they might pass, or the identity of any possible friend in the street.

Others pushed along, thinking more of the respective errands on which they were bound than of any violence of weather, and heeding the plashing shower no more than if it had been sunshine and fair walking. Among these was the resolute Hopkins, who, embowered in a cheap blue-cotton umbrella, strided along, bent on the thorough and faithful discharge of his arduous duties as scourer or canvasser of the Ward.

He had selected for the first visitation, a rear-building in a bye-street, inhabited by sundry gentlemen of doubtful politics, and making all proper speed, he arrived in a short time in the neighborhood where he intended to operate. Opening a blind gate, which worked with a pulley and closed swiftly behind him, Puffer found himself in a square enclosure, filled with carts, fragments of boarding, old iron pots, broken pieces of garden-fence standing against the walls, two cistern-heads, and, at the rear, a row of cheap wooden houses, with the windows dashed out, sundry breaches in the casing, and various red-pots, supposed to contain stunted specimens

of horticulture, arranged in the upper windows. Directly in the middle of the yard, there stood, under one large ivory-handled umbrella, a couple of well-dressed white-haired individuals—one of whom was very stout, portly and commanding, and the other very shrunk, round-shouldered and obsequious—looking up at the buildings; the portly gentleman staring at them with great severity and talking boisterously, and the round-shouldered, glancing up at the portly gentleman, meekly, and making minutes of what he said.

“Draught of the chimneys, heavy: note that down, will you?” said the portly gentleman, peremptorily.

“I will,” said the meek man, “It’s down, sir.”

“Supposed equal to two factory furnaces, with the blowers on: down with that—and put my initial to it, if you please.”

“I have, in large capitals,” said the timid gentleman.

“That’s right,” said the portly gentleman, promptly. “Skuttles always open, and children allowed to smoke burnt rattans: I see one of ’em at it now. Will you mark *that* down?” cried the stout gentleman, evidently very much enraged, and with a startling emphasis that caused the meek man to jump out from under the shelter, which compelled his superior to order him back, twice, very distinctly, before he could be induced to return to his duty, and chronicle what fell from the stout gentleman’s lips. “They dry their hose at No. nine, on the back of a rocker before the fire; and use a decayed Duch-oven at No. eleven,—this last attributable to the extravagance of the lower orders, who are too proud to patronize the baker.”

“That’s a very happy observation,” said the meek man, “Shall I print it out large, like the play-bills?”

“Stuff!” cried the portly gentleman, smiling haughtily, “just mind your business, and recollect that all private feelings are absorbed in the Company’s interests—will ye?”

“I’ll try,” said the meek man, timidly.

“Do! and just say, if you please, that the first floor’s occupied by a journeyman lightning-maker.”

“A journeyman lightning-maker!” echoed the meek man.

“None of your nonsense, now, Crump—but down with what I tell you: a journeyman lightning-maker, in the employ of one of the theatres. Say, we are informed, that he lives on brandy, (brandy’s a pretty inflammatory article, I believe, and cases of spontaneous combustion have occurred: put that reflection in a note, and mark it J. B. in the corner),

and makes lightning in the garret. Now, for the cisterns. Have you smelt No. eleven?"

"I have, sir," answered the secretary, making a wry face, "and it's uncommon noxious."

"Do you know the cause?" asked the portly gentleman, disdainfully.

"I do not, sir?" answered the meek gentleman, groping in his pockets.

"A child—a juvenile small child—that went to a Public School, took his own life in despair, one day, in that very cistern, sir—because he could n't spell phthisic, sir!"

"That was strange, was n't it?"

"Very strange, Crump. The child came home in the afternoon, with the same green bag—take notice, sir—the same green bag on his arm that he'd carried for fourteen months, and said, 'Mother, there's a pain,' laying his hand on his head, 'a great violent pain here.' That was all he said, and then he went up stairs, made up his little couch, tied his wooden horse to a bed-post, with a new ribbon about his neck, put on his Sunday hat and a clean apron, and stepping stealthily down stairs, walked comfortably into the cistern, and ended all his agonies."

"That's a remarkable affair," said the secretary, with his mouth and eyes wide open. "Do n't you think it's a serious argument against the Public Schools, sir?"

"It's a smasher, Crump: an extra-hazardous smasher," said the Insurance President, for that proved to be his official station. "There's something wrong in the system, you may depend on it; or children would never destroy themselves in this way because they can't spell diphthong words of two syllables. Now, to business, if you please. Say, it's the opinion of the President, that no engine will ever consent to draw water from the cistern of No. eleven; that engines can't be expected to take little boys or little girls into their chambers and extinguish their bereaved parents' burning dwellings with the rinsings. Firemen have feelings, (this is a moral axiom, for the benefit of the Directors), engines have works: and although the coroner did sit on the cistern-lid the better part of an entire night, inquiring into this melancholy case, and sent down several courageous small boys with boat-hooks, and called patriotically into the cistern himself, yet add, the boy was never found; and from the fact of deceased's never having been seen to come out, a strong suspicion prevails in

the neighborhood that he is still in: but what makes the corpse so very outrageous and stubborn, nobody can say. Is that it, Crump?"

"All down, sir," answered Mr. Crump.

"Stand out from the umbrella, then, if you please, Mr. Crump: business is over. You're Crump and I'm Blinker." And the Insurance President looked down upon his assistant in the most commanding fashion.

Crump obeyed, and, withdrawing from the brown-silk protector, stood outside, awaiting the further pleasure of the portly gentleman.

"This is a sweet day, Crump," said the President, contemplating with evident satisfaction the huge drops that pashed in one of the puddles.

"Charming!" said Crump, slyly inserting a cotton pocket-handkerchief between his coat-collar and the back of his neck, for Crump was slightly rheumatic.

"Stocks should rise, in weather like this," said Mr. Blinker. "The roofs are all good and wet, cellars under water, and a good number of garrets flooded. Now, if we could have a little rain horizontally, the second stories would be nice and safe. To be sure, families might suffer a little inconvenience—but it would be morally impossible for fires to show themselves, and I should look in the papers for two or three melancholy cases of incendiaries' having made way with themselves. It's a pelter, Crump."

"That, I believe, is admitted," answered that worthy individual, with a slight tinge of impudence in his manner—buttoning up his side-pockets, which began to fill, and throwing his hands behind him under his coat-tails, which arrangement, as he stooped forward, formed a commodious roof for the rain to run off at.

"It's lucky we're not in the marine line," continued the President, glancing at the Secretary: "Goods, not under hatches, will be nicely soaked, I'm sure; particularly woollens and drabs."

Now it so happened, that the unfortunate Crump was the owner of a very pretty pair of woolen drabs—rather old fashioned, to be sure—which, very singularly, he was wearing at that very moment, as he stood in the shower in the open yard: but as Mr. Blinker was well known as a benevolent-minded gentleman, and above all manner of personalities, Crump was

bound to regard his observation as one of those happy general reflections for which he was equally remarkable.

"The shower comes down so nice and straight," said Mr. Blinker, erecting his umbrella, and drawing himself close under its centre, at the same time consulting his watch, "so nice and straight, that it must put out a good many kitchen-fires; which all helps:—but it's time to be at the office. Do you go on, Crump, and have the grate well piled—do n't spare the coals, for I am chilly. But stop—whose buildings are these, did you say?"

"I did n't say," answered Mr. Crump, flushing slightly.

"Whose?" cried Mr. Blinker, in his official key, which started the secretary into a small pond.

"Fyler Close's, sir," answered the intelligent Crump, speedily.

"Humph—very well," said Mr. Blinker. "Go on: and don't forget to wheel my chair out, and warm my slippers. And if the lime-dealer calls for his policy, tell him it is n't made out, and that he may call the first fair day. This is fine weather for slacking that article, Crump; excellent weather to set houses on fire with water and white chalk—do you understand? Go!"

At this, the secretary picked his way through the yard, carrying his head obliquely, to avoid the rain that dashed directly in his face, and holding the gate for a moment, was followed by the superior functionary, in great state; who paused once or twice, however, and turned about to take a glance at the buildings under survey for insurance.

"Very well," said Puffer Hopkins, stepping out from under a shed, where he had ambushed himself during this instructive conversation: "These gentlemen must be on the relief-committee—they have a wonderful tenderness for poor people, and would n't see 'em made martyrs of by a conflagration, for all the world. Let me see: I think I'll visit the lightning-maker in the garret, first. He's a genius, no doubt—and, belonging to the melo-dramatic school, may dazzle two or three weak minds in the neighborhood."

With these words, the young politician proceeded to the house which had been pointed out as the residence of the lightning-maker, and knocked gently at the door.

The summons was answered by a small girl, with an unclean face and eyes that twinkled through the dirt like a ground-mole's, who gave him to understand that the gentle-

man in question was at that moment in the garret of the building, busy upon a two-quarter, and that he, Puffer Hopkins, if he went up stairs, had better come upon him cautiously, lest he might, in the confusion of a sudden surprise, let slip a volcano, or something horrible of that nature, in the combustible line.

Taking to heart the suggestion of the small adviser, Puffer walked up stairs, and knocked at the door of the artizan's laboratory with great discretion, beginning with a rap in the very lowest key, and ascending gradually to a clear double-knock.

"Hold a minute," cried a voice from within, "till I mix in a trifle of red and blue. If you should come in now," continued the voice, pondering and speaking a word or two only at a time, at if it was interrupted by some manual operation, "you'd lose us three good rounds with the pit. They always loves to see a sheet of red fire, provided there's a cross of blue in it."

In a moment Puffer was admitted, and discovered a lean man, bending over a mortar, with great staring eyes, and cheeks discolored with brimstone or yellow fumes of some other kind; and surrounded by black bottles, two or three broken pestles, an iron retort, and various other implements of his trade. Puffer introduced himself, and proceeded at once to the exercise of his function as a scourer.

"This profession of yours," said Puffer—he dared not call it a trade, although the poor workman was up to his eyes in vile yellow paste and charcoal-dust—"This profession, sir, must give you many patriotic feelings of a high cast, sir."

"It does, sir," answered the lightning-maker, slightly mistaking his meaning: "I've told the manager, more than fifty times, that lightning such as mine is worth ninepence a bottle, but he never would pay more than fourpence ha'penny: except in volcanoes—they's always two-quarters."

"I mean, sir," continued the scourer, "that when you see the vivid fires blazing on Lake Erie—when Perry's working his ship about like a velocipede, and the guns are bursting off, and the enemy is paddling away like ducks—is not your soul then stirred, sir? Do you not feel impelled to achieve some great, some glorious act? What do you do—what can you do, in such a moment of intense, overwhelming excitement?"

"I generally," answered the lightning-maker, with an em-

phasis upon the personal pronoun, as if some difference of practice might possibly prevail, "*I* generally takes a glass of beer, with the froth on."

"But, sir, when you see the dwelling-house roof, kindled by your bomb-shells, all a-blaze with the midnight conflagration—the rafters melting away, I may say, with the intense heat, and the engines working their pumps in vain—do n't you think then, sir, of some peaceful family, living in some secluded valley, broken in upon by the heartless incendiary with his demon matches, and burning down their cottage with all its out-houses?"

"In such cases," answered the lightning-maker, "I thinks of my two babies at home, with their poor lame mother—and I makes it a point, if my feelings is very much wrought up, as the prompter says, to run home between the acts to see that all 's safe, and put a bucket of water by the hearth:—is n't that the thing?"

"I think it is: and I'm glad to hear you talk so feelingly," answered Puffer Hopkins; "our next mayor's a very domestic-minded man—just such a man as you are—only I do n't believe he'd be so prudent and active about the bucket on the hearth."

At this, the lightning-maker smiled pleasantly to himself, and unconsciously thrust a large roll of brimstone in his cheek.

"Is this your natural complexion that you have on this morning?" resumed Puffer Hopkins, seeing how well the personal compliment took, and glancing at the lightning-maker's yellow chaps. "If it is, the resemblance between yourself and the gentleman I have mentioned is more striking than I could have expected: his nose is a copper—is n't yours inclining a little that way?"

"I believe it is," answered the journeyman lightning-maker, complacently.

"Your eye is a deep grey, I think, as far as I can see it by this light: that's what the Committee of Nomination, when they waited on the next Mayor, thought was his."

In the flutter of nerves created by the scourer's instituting these pleasant comparisons, the lightning-maker unadvisedly brought together a couple of hostile combustibles, which occasioned the premature bursting of a small bottle of azure lightning—without scenery to match; and a small sky-light was opened thereby, through a decayed shingle in the roof.

Instructed, by this, of the tropical climate of the lightning-maker's garret, and thinking that a sufficient train had been laid for a future vote, Puffer—who had been advised of the residence of a stout cobbler in the neighboring attic—trotted up a ladder and through the open skuttle, and scrambling over the pitched roof, plunged down a similar opening in the next house, and came very suddenly upon the object he sought. The burly shoe-maker was seated on a cobbler's bench, working away merrily enough: at his side was laid a long clay-pipe, filled ready to be lighted, and hard by him a bundle of chattels, corded up, and arranged, apparently, for instant transportation.

"How is this?" cried the cobbler, as his eye caught the person of Puffer Hopkins: "This is n't fair—nor is it legal in any courts, whether of Chancery or common law. Writs do n't descend, sir—I know enough for that: no deputy sheriff was ever enough of an angel to come from above. I resist process—do you hear that?"

Saying this, the cobbler started up, and seizing his bench, planted it on end in front of the corded bale of chattels, and standing between the two, he glared fiercely, through the circular broken seat of the bench, on the suspected deputy.

A few words, however, calmed his agitation: he threw down his bench, resumed his seat, and in token of his perfect satisfaction and pleasure in the explanation Puffer had given, of the character in which he visited him, he kindled his pipe and smoked away in good, long, hearty puffs.

Growing communicative, as their intercourse continued, Puffer at length learned that the gentleman was the proprietor of the Dutch oven down stairs—the terror of Mr. Blinker, the President—was greatly distressed by creditors, who hunted him with catchpoles and marshals from morning till night, that all his proprietary interest on the lower floors lay in the oven aforesaid and a very comfortable little fat wife, (whose pride and comfort consisted in a turkey browned before a slow fire), and other little necessities allowed by law. The corded bale, held his valuables; and with these, he was prepared to mount, at a moment's warning, through the scuttle, and to convey himself to the peak of the house, where he made it a point to sit in the shadow of a broad chimney and smoke his pipe at ease, until the cloud of pursuers was fairly dispersed or blown over.

"They shall never catch me, while I live," cried the cob-

bler, energetically. "If they come on the roof, I'll climb down the lightning-rod with that bundle on my back; I can do it:—and if one of the rascals attempts to climb up to me, I'll drop it, and break his neck off, short—depend on that. My dear fellow, I'd be at the expense of the board, lodging and education of a South American Condor, and teach him to bear it off in his beak, before they should touch a thread of it. Now you know my mind!"

At this, he struck a thick heel, on which he was at work, a thumping blow with his hammer, and kicked his lapstone across the whole breadth of the garret.

Puffer Hopkins of course applauded the spirit of the cobbler, and artlessly suggested that no man, with the soul of a man, would submit quietly to such impertinent intermeddling with his private affairs.

"However, my friend," he continued, scouring as industriously as he well knew how, "I trust this will not always be so. These gentlemen of the law may yet have their combs cut: I do n't think they will always be allowed to crow and chanticleer it over honest men!"

"Why not?" asked the cobbler, looking at Puffer Hopkins anxiously, and planting his great hands upon his knees.

"For no very particular reason," answered the scourer, "except that I have heard it suggested that our new Common Council—mind, I say our new Common Council—will abolish the office of sheriff, and all others that interfere with the enjoyment of a man's property by himself. They'll do away with writs, and executions, and all that sort of thing," said Puffer, coolly, "that's all!"

"Say you so?" shouted the cobbler, springing from his bench and seizing Puffer by the hand: "I'm your man! Now try your luck on the down-stairs people—do n't let me keep you back a minute. Try the bereaved mother, down stairs: her husband's a'wavering—have him, by all means. Dogs! you've done me more good than the sight of the big boot in the square the first time I set eyes on it. God speed you! Luck to you!"

With these ejaculations, the cobbler dismissed his comforting visiter, who hurried below, and opening, according to the instructions he had received, the first door to the right, arrived at a new field in the domain to be canvassed.

Taking a rapid and comprehensive survey, Puffer Hopkins was aware that he had entered the apartment of the bereav-

ed mother—for there upon the mantel in a glass case, dressed in crape, stood the identical wooden horse, with the ribbon about his neck that had been attached to the bed-post by the little misanthrope, on the day he had taken his own life in the cistern.

As he discovered this, a gloom suddenly came over the countenance of the scourer, and he approached the afflicted parent with an aspect as wo-begone and dolorous as the wood-cut frontispiece of the most melancholy Mourner's Companion ever printed.

"Mr. Hopkins, of the Ward Committee," said Puffer, advancing and taking the bereaved one by the hand. "The good man of the house is not in, I think?"

"No, he is n't, sir," she answered; "it's very little that he is in now, since the event. He can't bear the sight, poor man, of that grievous monument there"—pointing to the quadruped in the glass case—"always in his sight. It e'en a'most drives him mad."

Puffer Hopkins wondered—if the sight of a miserable caricature of a horse in wood, under a glass cover, was so near making a lunatic of him—why he did n't go mad at once, like a sensible man, and shiver it all in atoms, which would have done something towards making it invisible: but he did n't utter these thoughts, but on the contrary kept them hidden in the very darkest recess of his bosom.

"You do right, madam," continued Puffer, "to keep that constantly before your eyes. It's a softening object—a mellowing spectacle for the heart to contemplate. Oh, no; there is nothing, there can be nothing," pursued the scourer, in a voice choked with agony, and turning away as if he was too manly to expose his feelings, "like a mother's grief. A mother's grief—it is a sacred and a solemn thing: and when the affliction comes thus—in this ghastly shape—it's too much to think of. Who can repress their tears at the thought of the agony of this family on the day of this fatal discovery? the father frantic with sorrow and exertions to get the body; sisters and brothers—how many have you, madam?"

"Five small ones—one at the breast."

"Five little ones, shouting for the departed angel: and his mother—his poor, bereaved, broken hearted mother—when she thinks of the suit he had on, his nice, tidy Sunday suit, bends over the cistern and drops in her tears till it overflows! Oh, there's a picture for the moralist and the patriot!"

"Do n't, sir—do n't," cried the afflicted mother. "Do n't—your eloquence quite breaks my heart: it makes me feel it all over again."

"I will not," said Puffer, "I'll resist my feelings, and say no more about it: not if you'll be good enough to take this little order on the dry-goods dealer—just so that the poor boy, if he should ever be found, may be put in a decent shroud; he was a small boy, I think—the order's for a small boy—a very small boy. And oblige me by telling your husband that Puffer Hopkins, of the Vigilance Committee, called. Good day: good day—poor child." Uttering these last words with a pathetic glance at the toy on the mantel, and heaving a profound sigh, the scourer closed the door.

With the door, he closed his labors for the day, and shaped his course homeward, satisfied that he had done his country some slight service, and that two or three minds, at least, had been sufficiently enlightened to vote the proper ticket at the next charter election.

EDWARD EVERETT.

THREE points strike us, as peculiar to American literature, thus far: the early age at which our authors have attained the maturity of their powers—generally, in their first works; a tendency to imitation, now less seen than at first; and the prevalence of elegance, growing out of the inclination to write after models, and to the cultivation of the faculty of Taste.

A glance at the productions of American writers, since the commencement of the present century, will satisfy any one as to the facts of our first position. Of writers who have published their best works some years since, and in their youth, Bryant, Dana, Halleck, and several others might be mentioned. Of our contemporary poets, (those who have published poems quite lately), Longfellow, Willis and Holmes are still young. The first speeches of our orators have been incontestably the best. The earlier speeches of Webster, for example, are classic models, while the later are comparatively mere newspaper harangues.

As to the second point, the tendency to imitation, facts again are abundant. Dennie, our first essayist, was a professedly Addisonian writer. Dr. Franklin copied after the same original at first, but gradually fell into a characteristic style of his own. Irving and Paulding, in their *Salmagundi*, imitated the English comic essayists. Paulding's *John Bull* was a meagre copy of Arbuthnot's original. Charles Brockden Brown, our first novelist, was a pupil of Godwin. Our latest writer of fiction, Nathaniel Hawthorne, is tinged with German romanticism, and a vein of fantastic sentiment peculiar to the authors of that country. Dana and Bryant are followers of Wordsworth. Halleck's muse is a composite of Campbell, Sir John Suckling and Byron's *Don Juan*. Longfellow unites—as far as his genius extends—the fancy of the Germans, the sentiment of Wordsworth, and the fastidious elegance of Gray. Willis is, in his prose, essentially a Frenchman. Holmes has cleverly caught a variety of styles.

This tendency to imitation springs somewhat out of the nature of the genius of our writers, instinctively directed towards elegance. Taste seems to have been the ruling faculty of our authors. The only classic book of travels has been written by an American: the *Year in Spain*. The only classic English histories, since the time of Hume, Gibbon and Robertson, have been written by Americans: Bancroft, Irving, Prescott. Irving is the only classic humorist, since the old novelists. Ames, Wirt, Everett, Webster, are the only classic orators, since Burke and his splendid contemporaries. To the predominance of taste, too, may be ascribed the early maturity of American genius. With a certain portion of genius, highly cultivated, our writers have gathered an early and rich crop, in a soil that soon became effete.—Taste is not a progressive faculty—it stops at a certain point; varying with the different characters of men. It soon reaches its limits. Beyond a degree of cultivation, clearly enough defined, it cannot proceed. A man of fine taste affects a certain line of study or composition and attaches himself to none other. He is

Content to dwell in decencies forever.

His taste, repelling the common, as too low for it, equally shuns the sublime, as above it, and is willing to remain in a safe mediocrity.

Edward Everett is one of the best specimens of American elegance. A finished scholar, a graceful writer, an accomplished orator, he is an incarnation of the very spirit of elegance. We can no more imagine his doing an awkward action, than his writing a clumsy sentence. With this characteristic trait, he has little pretension to grandeur of imagination or brilliancy of fancy, laying claim to not much besides comprehensive sense, ingenuity, and the utmost propriety—rarely reaching beauty—of sentiment.

Mr. Everett may be ranked among our instances of an early exhibition of talent. At the age of nineteen, he succeeded his amiable friend Buckminster, as pastor of the Brattle street Church, the year before having been appointed Latin tutor at Cambridge. Two years after, he was called to the chair of Greek Professor, at the same University. Shortly after this, again, he went to Europe, for the purposes of study and observation, where he remained nearly five years. More than two years of this period were passed in Germany, in study, and in the observation of the different methods of instruction pursued in the public universities. On his return to the United States, he accepted the editorship of the *North American Review*. He continued editor of this periodical between three and four years. About the year 1824, he entered political life, having previously resigned his professorship, and since that time, he is best known to the public as the orator and statesman.

In so diversified a career, considerable knowledge was to be gathered, and has been, we dare say, treasured up. So observant a mind must have remarked much, which, polished by study and enlightened by research, should be left as the record of a life devoted to religion, letters, taste and public spirit.

The chief character which Everett will sustain with posterity, will be that of a polished writer and elegant orator. As a scholar, he has certainly been in his time very industrious, and with his fine taste to guide him, his acquirements are of the most select character. Of his editorial career we know little. Few articles are ascribed, with certainty, to his pen. He spoke and wrote strongly, on the books of the Hall and Trollope school of travelers: he labored to infuse an American spirit into our growing literature, and the proper idea of right and duty into American politics. It is not as a periodical writer, however, that he has attained so envia-

ble a reputation. His chief success lies in another field of display.

The literary address has, in the hands of Everett, become a classic form of composition. This species of oratory is the growth of the present century. Differing from the lecture, in being less strictly didactic and more popular in its cast, it is still the elaborate eloquence of the fine scholar. The audience it addresses is of the most intelligent class: the occasion, generally, the celebration of a literary festival. Historical celebrations have also formed the frequent occasion of Mr. Everett's oratory. Important epochs in our history have furnished the most appropriate topics for his talent. He has delivered orations of this description at Plymouth, at Concord, at Worcester: fourth of July orations at Cambridge, at Charlestown, and at Lowell. Turning over the collected volume, we should judge the first oration to be the best. At a single bound, he reached his present rank. The oration was delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, and the topic, "the peculiar motives to literary exertion in America." Highly finished, ingenious, elegant; it was more—even glowing and eloquent. In a different walk, Everett almost equalled this admirable composition in his famous eulogy on Lafayette. Taking Mr. Everett on different ground, in a comparison with Daniel Webster he sinks to an inferior station. The orations of the two orators, each containing the eulogy of Adams and Jefferson, if paralleled, will give the true characters of the men. Webster is sometimes inelegant: Everett always correct. Webster is powerful where Everett would be feeble. Strength and grace are mutually opposed. The Corinthian structure of Everett wants the force and manly solidity of the Doric edifice of Webster. Webster lacks the fineness and accomplishment of Everett's mind, but he has an inherent and original force, that has made him one of the greatest orators of his age and country.

This style of literary eloquence has been adopted in the Senate and at the Bar, with great effect. We have among our own countrymen two models, in Ames and Wirt. Fisher Ames was the Isocrates of his day—sweet, fluent and musical. His eulogies on Washington and Hamilton are masterpieces, steeped in the most tender strains of elegiac eloquence. His great speech on the British treaty contains passages imitated from, and almost equaling, some of the best passages of Burke.

William Wirt—a name dear to the lovers of the classic essay and polished oratory—before the time of Mr. Everett, was, unquestionably, the most elegant minded of all our statesmen. It is to be regretted that he did not cultivate his talents for literature in later life, as his early prose compositions are much superior to those of Dennie, who was placed foremost among the periodical writers of his day. We are satisfied that Wirt would have equalled the best papers of Mackenzie, in the *Lounger*, in his mingled humor and elegant sentiment, and in his oratory have surpassed his own famous defence of Blennerhasset.

In England, the only professed literary orator, is at once the greatest of their political writers and one of the first of their philosophers—Edmund Burke. He, alone, of his great contemporaries, carefully elaborated his speeches, to such perfection, that they might be called Attic, did they not surpass anything left to us of Athenian oratory. In richness of imagination, subtlety of thought, and brilliancy of style, he is incomparable. The great orators of England, generally, left no memorials of their eloquence behind them. Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Mansfield, Pultney, Charles Townshend, (Lord North), are now only glorious names.

Mr. Everett does not limit himself to merely literary or purely historical orations. He occasionally addresses an association like the mechanics' institutes and scientific lyceums of Boston, or the American Institute of this city, before which he delivered an address of this nature several years ago. Everett is an ardent patriot, and wishes to diffuse the privileges of education and political intelligence throughout the country. His endeavors have ever been warmly excited on behalf of the people, though he is far from being a demagogue in his appeals or in his views of politics. His innate purity of character would deter him from this, as well as the influence of his elevated pursuits.

J.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT,

THE CORN-LAW RHYMER.

TO those who profess a love for letters, no plea is needed for the sacred function of the poet : he may not ask, as a suppliant, permission to explain a new or strange doctrine ; for his are the words of lasting truth, not the passionate utterings of heresy or madness. The caution is needless, "Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower ;" and even contumelious neglect is self-punished. The poet is the only teacher, and his prelude is to be the birth of thought, as thoughts are pregnant with actions ; and so as the cycle of poetry passes, philosophic systems, laws, theories, and heroic deeds spring up, like a world from the touch of light. The philosopher is thus the eldest of pupils only, and his lesson is wrapt in the music of poetry, so that sharpest ears are required to hear. But it is not lost, for as there never was yet a drop of water that did not work out its office in the universe, so these divine words, falling on the barren earth of some poor Adamitic heart, and sucked into its secret fountains, thence welling up shall make a better, a greener, and a fresher world. Then be not like the foolish Ethiopian, and mow at the angry clouds because they scatter blessings with a frown, and refuse the reproofs of the poet, who would make men kind, lovers of God and lovers of men, compassionate, soft-hearted. For if you gainsay admonition, you are self-convicted of the offence.

Without, then, provoking the objurcation of any against our poet as a political partizan, it is permitted to glance at the evil which is the subject of his musing. In forming an estimate of poetic character, it is often necessary to learn the circumstance and the subject that warmed into harmonious rage. To know that *Æschylus* at *Salamis*, and *Cervantes* at *Lepanto*, helped check Persians and Turks from barbarizing the world, gives us power to fathom in a measure their ardent hope and truth. Our sympathy with the *Corn-Law Rhymer* is the more awakened, since the brunt of a political battle has reached our ears from old England's shores ; and the Persians victorious on the hustings, and Turks laurelled at *St. Stephens*, were events not more startling than the result. How does it come to pass, that Justice should be

repudiated, and that by the injured ; and the oppressor's despair worshipped, instead of the hope of a better future ? Here a measure that has slain thousands by aid of a detestable taxation, is at an issue, and when the trial comes, the grand assize of England find for the disseizors ; and wrong, they say, has the better right. The stain of cowardice, venality, or stupidity, must cleave to a decision that sanctions the present corn-laws, and guards the wicked splendor of those, whose glitter is but the misery of their fellows, whose fatness is torn from the lean ribs of famished wretches. It is indeed much to be prayed for, that that tyranny which lives in the heart of man, and makes that living temple the sepulchre of a vampyre, should be exhumed, and burnt as it must be in penitential and purifying flames. Then the land of England might enjoy her Sabbaths in peace. What wonder at the indignation and the bold phillipics of our true hearted poet, looking at these things ; at seeing the golden bounty of the field taxed, the strong man searching for food and labor, and finding much of the latter, and so little of the former as scarce to keep starvation from grappling with his life. Do you not wonder, that all the virtue and knowledge of the realm have not driven, with a shout, the tax-makers of England therefrom, along with the worse than devilish curse they affix to the soil ? Truly it was a hard curse Lucifer brought into Eden ; but more thorny is the harvest of the poor in England : they labor, and in the sweat of their brow—they starve.

The operation of these laws, we are told, is about equal to a tax of twenty per cent., or an increase of the price of bread thus much ; of which amount, the mere duty levied, which goes partly to keep down debt and support government and laws—always a benefit—is but a small fraction, say one fifth, of the appreciation ; while the rest goes to the revenue of those, whose estates produce wheat and other edibles, and who thus can, by a pleasant juggle, reap literally grain out of the blood of the life of their brethren, as well as the acres of their inheritance. Now here, all that the poet can look at, is the foul wrong ; and through the world of manhood, not fiendhood, raise a pity and a shudder of sympathy. The poet is no false-title-pleading lawyer, who declaims in well-turned sentences aptly fitted with winding phrase, and precedents drawn from time when ancient memory finds no stop to injustice, arranged to make reasonable people believe

that the descendant of William the bastard and his Parliament can tax at will, though thousands die ; he is in nothing like a statistico-politico-economico zany, who would make our reason turn a somersault, like his cat-backed conscience, over statistical tables, and tell that manufactures and wealth have vastly increased, by the Egyptian policy of making men work harder for their bread, through these laws that deprive not of straw but food, men of the same race, confined in a bondage where there are no flesh pots, but an abundance of tax and task mastering.

Let it not be said, that this is a subject not heroic and suited for the poet, like the narrative of desolation on the field, where nations drop in blood. Each one of these families, where the bread tax has been a ban, with its world of suffering and painful thoughts, successions of hope and fear, till death came, is a subject for our contemplation, a mean to awaken our tears till the eyes run over, and thrill the soul like a harp string. Tell us that the great elder poets reprove in lofty abstractions, and far removed allegories striving at the fountains of life, to purify the thought, teaching virtue rather than good manners, and their audience lawgivers, founders of cities and kings. Each man is a world, each man a lawgiver : some are poets, all can learn of the poet : all love the flowers, and bless the hands that sow them and the hearts that are God's best flowers, full of the perfume of love. But then, this national starvation is no unheroic matter. Riding with noiseless steps like the pestilence, it chokes with its air fingers the child, and sucks the marrow of the man. The Florentine poet could draw the sad dungeon, and condemning all tyranny in that one impious deed, make terror sempiternal, while the page should last that told of Count Ugolino and his children, some in manly strength, some in childhood, all murdered by famine. Oh, when Justice at her day reveals the suffering of England, scenes may show out more horrible than the Italian. Alas ! for the sad subject of our author, in a moiety of his productions. His corn-law rhymes, one half almost of the volume of his works, form a choral wail, expressing the effect upon him of this sad drama ; where the impending fate is the corn-law tax, bringing a more startling action along, than ever rose before the eyes and prompted the modulated sobs of Theban or Argive Choretide.

But what theatre was like the factory, the workhouse, the

cottage, and starved figures who are men? And there is much diversity of feeling shown, as different actors advance; there are songs of threatening indignation if the spoilers repent not; of sympathy and kindness to the spoiled, pointing a home and a hope behind the dark clouds, and showing the earth giving types of beauty yet, and an earnest of a better time. Sorrow, and a little joy mingled as it is in life, and a soul confidence in the great Arbiter of life, are characteristic of the Corn-Law Rhymes. One feature of Elliott is the impassioned earnestness of all that he says; it is what he thinks in his heart; and to this essential of the orator he adds a power of expression, the amplification by perfect description, in word of adjunct and attribute, rather than by illustration and similitude. You might fancy him a Gracchus, his voice mixing with the flute of the servant as the sound of the sentences meet the ear, and epithets of remonstrance and monition mingling, you acknowledge the orator pleading a just cause. Among the poets of similar rhetorical power, enumerating every quality and exhausting points of view, see Young:—he is a solemn poetic orator, declaiming like the toll of a bell lamenting the dead. So Elliott, though far removed in style from Young, seems an orator. He supplies descriptions rather than similes, and places the object in a flood of light express, not forms a phantasm surrounded with a halo of party-colored tints. This quality, joined with the passion of the lyric poet, makes the noblest display of rhetoric, the word of truth and the divine song—and this renders the odes of our modern British Tyrtæus stirring as the brazen voice of a trumpet. In contrast with this honest bold denunciation and free expression of the thought, the natural softness that embraces the beauties of the outward world of sights and sounds harmonious, which man cannot all destroy, is seen in our poet's writings. The trees and flowers may sometimes prove tyrants, the elements slay, but mostly they smile; and though they owe man no allegiance—"he never gave them kingdoms"—they have given to the oppressed and the poor a good realm, teaching comfort and giving assurance of a happier season.

This lesson taught by external nature, the bee murmuring at his sweet task, the flower dispensing beauty, and the rill chiming as it nurtures all, has charmed the poet into an ecstasy of devotion. He joys in it, and he blesses the eternal source of all things so gloriously good; he is transported into an

Elysium, and has learned unutterable things from the kind sky that embraces him, the winds that kiss him, the chalices of the flowers that offer him incense; and then to wake from a dream of love, universal, spreading love, and find those whom this bounty surrounds clutching the children of the same father by the throat, and claiming some paltry debt, ignorant of forgiveness and kindness, ignorant of justice, insensible to all the voices of angels around whispering mercy, to the aims of the Creator that end in happiness to all, and trampling with "clouted shoon" the remembrance of an Eden to the dust—no wonder the poet condemns the spoilers that disturb his devotions, and the tones of his upbraiding harp are like shadows of clouds, chasing over the green sown and yellow stubble in autumn.

FOREST WORSHIP.

Within the sun-lit forest,
 Our roof the bright blue sky,
 Where fountains flow and wild flowers blow,
 We lift our hearts on high :
 Beneath the frown of wicked men
 Our country's strength is bowing ;
 But thanks to God ! they can't prevent
 The lone wild flowers from blowing.

High, high above the tree tops,
 The lark is soaring free ;
 Where streams the light through broken clouds,
 His speckled breast I see.
 Beneath the might of wicked men
 The poor man's worth is dying ;
 But thanked be God ! in spite of them
 The lark still warbles flying.

The preacher prays, " Lord bless us,"
 " Lord ! bless us " echo cries ;
 " Amen ! " the breezes murmur low,
 " Amen ! " the rill replies :
 The ceaseless toil of wo-worn hearts
 The prond with pangs are paying ;
 But here, O God of earth and heaven !
 The humble heart is praying !

How softly in the pauses
 Of song re-echoed wide,
 The cushat's coo, the linnet's lay
 O'er rill and river glide !

With evil deeds of evil men
The affrighted land is ringing ;
But still, O Lord ! the pious heart
And soul-toned voice are singing.

Hush, hush ! the preacher preacheth
" Wo to the oppressor, wo !"
But sudden gloom o'ercasts the sun
And saddened flowers below.
So frowns the Lord ! but, tyrants, ye
Deride his indignation,
And see not in his gathered brow
Your days of tribulation.

Speak low, thou heaven-paid teacher !
The tempest bursts above ;
God whispers in the thunder ; hear
The terrors of his love !
On useful hands and honest hearts
The base their wrath are wreaking ;
But thanked be God ! they can't prevent
The storm of heaven from speaking.

The wo is denounced honestly enough, though savoring too much, perhaps, of the preaching of the prophet to the Ninevites, to be exactly consonant to the morality of the Christian and the poet. He frequently corrects this vein, and more nobly begs forgiveness and a better mind for the enemies of mankind. Let the following Apostrophe to the Church of England attest the well-spring of love at his heart.

Church bedewed with martyrs' blood,
Mother of the wise and good !
Temple of our smiles and tears,
Hoary with the frost of years !
Holy Church, eternal, true !
What for thee will bread tax do ?
It will strip thee bare as she
Whom a despot stripped for thee ;
Of thy surplice make thy pall,
Low'r thy pride, and take thy all,
Save thy truth established well,
Which—when spire and pinnacle,
Gorgeous arch, and figured stone,
Cease to tell of glories gone—
Still shall speak of thee, and Him
Whom adore the Seraphim.

Our author but infrequently overwhelms the mind by representing the stern conflict of active powers, which excites

admiration or affright—there are “masters of terror” among poets as well as warriors—but he would show affections and virtue dwelling in a sad and sick house; he would show the man, the warrior, the world wounded to death, and all overpowered, looking only in trust and resignation to that which is but discerned in a distant future. The creative faculty is mere self-contemplation, it is the only practical mode and measure of justice, investing other men with the mind’s own feelings; and as, when describing, it is only the individual’s impression that is the object of thought, so, in forming a conception of character, there is but one actor, though many persons, in the possible changes that the thinker might undergo. The judge who can conceive the crime is the criminal who is condemned, and no one else. And the poet, though all blameless, is like the shield forged by the hands of Vulcan, which contains cities of men, fora, fields, conflicts and peaceful leagues:—at times the living imbossments, ruddy with wrath, freeze with gorgonian stare, and then the sad chamber, the unhoused wandering sufferers, and death, call us to the contemplation of our weakness, and how sorrowful, dependent, and pained, humanity may become. Thus is pity roused, when the weak, the suffering, the overborne, are shown holding fast to their integrity; the outward form of the body bowing in care, wo, and longings disappointed, beside what such small matters as the wholesale tyranny of traitorous bad men can deal out, in the way of starving robbery, and privation of light and air in factory prisons, (for they cannot spoil the poor man of his heaven-sent feast of love—the poet shows that these ravens with black wings can bring heavenly food, while they pluck the perishing meat away), and still the life of life remaining, love of father and mother, reverence to the dead, faith towards God. If bad men could kill these things in the heart, they could kill angels. All things are teaching to us affection; most of all, pictures of our brethren suffering, with their kindliness, and ah! their woes, their death, and the living faith and hope of the survivors, all passing in that phantasmagorical shade which the light of the poet illuminates, and which is our self. Call the records of man’s soul, poor and mean! Why, these are what elder bards mean, when they tell of Achilles or Protesilaus’ death; and the life of a single man is the action of all epics. “Take this single captive,” with his poor bereaved father and mother, his sister removed from him and them, longing for happiness,

yes, for the world's comfort for them ; willing to twine deeper and stronger the bands that hold each to the other, bands that shall last while stars forget to attract, because souls are worth more than stars or suns, and showing in the midst of all that is tearful, all that in recurring series since the flood has been the lot of generations, that the omnipotent Father is Father and friend, and by friendly afflictions has been luring to his own heart of infinite comprehensiveness, pity and forgiveness.

COME AND GONE.

The silent moonbeams on the drifted snow
Shine cold and pale and blue,
While through the cottage door the yule log's glow
Casts on the iced oak's trunk and gray rock's brow
A ruddy hue.

The red ray and the blue, distinct and fair,
Like happy groom and bride,
With azured green, and emerald-orange glare,
Gilding the icicles from branches bare,
Lie side by side.

The door is open and the fire burns bright,
And Hannah, at the door,
Stands—through the clear, cold, mooned and starry night,
Gazing intently towards the scarce-seen height
O'er the white moor.

'Tis Christmas eve, and from the distant town,
Her pale apprenticed son
Will to his heart-sick mother hasten down,
And snatch his hour of annual transport—flown
Ere well begun.

The Holy Book unread upon his knee
Old Alfred watcheth calm,
Till Edwin comes, no solemn prayer prays he ;
Till Edwin comes, the text he cannot see,
Nor chaunt the psalm.

And comes he not ? yea, from the wind-swept hill
The cottage fire he sees,
While of the past remembrance drinks her fill,
Crops childhood's flowers, and bids the unfrozen rill
Shine through green trees.

In thought, he hears the bee hum o'er the moor ;
In thought, the sheep boy's call ;

In thought, he meets his mother at the door ;
In thought, he hears his father, old and poor,
 "Thank God for all."

His sister he beholds who died when he,
 In London bound, wept o'er
Her last sad letter—vain her prayer to see
Poor Edwin yet again :—he ne'er will be
 Her playmate more !

No more with her wilt hear the bittern boom
 At evening's dewey close !
No more with her will wander where the broom
Contentends in beauty with the hawthorn bloom
 And budding rose !

Oh, love is strength ! love, with divine control,
 Recalls us when we roam !
In living light it bids the dimmed eye roll,
And gives a dove's wing to the fainting soul,
 And bears it home.

Home !—that sweet word hath turned his pale lip red,
 Relumed his fireless eye ;
Again the morning o'er his cheek is spread ;
The early rose, that seemed forever dead,
 Returns to die.

Home ! home !—Behold the cottage of the moor,
 That hears the sheep boy's call !
And Hannah meets him at the open door
With faint fond scream ; and Alfred, old and poor,
 "Thanks God for all !"

His lip is on his mother's ; to her breast
 She clasps him, heart to heart ;
His hands between his father's hands are pressed ;
They sob with joy, caressing and caressed ;
 How soon to part !

Why should they know that thou so soon, O Death !
 Wilt pluck him, like a weed ?
Why fear consumption in his quick-drawn breath ?
Why dread the hectic flower which blossometh
 That worms may feed ?

They talk of other days, when like the birds
 He culled the wild flowers' bloom,
And roamed the moorland with the houseless herds ;
They talk of Jane's sad prayer, and her last words,
 "Is Edwin come ?"

He wept. But still almost till morning beamed
They talked of Jane—then slept.
But though he slept, his eyes, half open, gleamed;
For still of dying Jane her brother dreamed,
And dreaming, wept.

At mid-day he arose, in tears, and sought
The churchyard where she lies.
He found her name beneath the snow wreath wrought;
Then from her grave a knot of grass he brought,
With tears and sighs.

The hour of parting came, when feelings deep
In the heart's depth awake.
To his sad mother, pausing oft to weep,
He gave a token, which he bade her keep
For Edwin's sake.

It was a grassy sprig and auburn tress
Together twined and tied.
He left them, then, for ever! could they less
Than bless and love that type of tenderness?
Childless they died!

Long in their hearts a cherished thought they wore;
And till their latest breath,
Blessed him, and kissed his last gift o'er and o'er;
But they beheld their Edwin's face no more,
In life or death!

For where the upheaved sea of trouble foams,
And sorrow's billows rave,
Men, in the wilderness of myriad homes,
Far from the desert, where the wild flock roams,
Dug Edwin's grave.

You that shed tears over dead Cordelia and darkened-minded Lear, restrain not a few drops from falling on the grave of the true-hearted brother and sister, and the clouded path of Alfred and Hannah. But does the poet suffer them all to die? are there no voices of singing birds, no perfume of blooming flowers in their churchyard, as voices from above when tragic horrors reach to a fifth act's deadly close? Yes, the poet could not suffer his darlings to lie forever in the damp clay. Like a brother in affliction—John Bunyan—he shows a golden gleam from the towers of a distant city of refuge made magnified and glorious since it falls on weeping eyes, angelic anthems more harmonious since sorrow-wounded ears are hearing.

Loving Hannah! Gentle Alfred! to you the whisper is coming, in silent night, at amber dawn; when the heart is prayerful it comes, it blesses with tears. Edwin speaks to you from under the green sod or the white snow.

Mother, I come from God and bliss;
Oh bless me with a mother's kiss!
Though dead, I spurn the tomb's control,
And clasp thee in the embrace of soul.
No terrors daunt, no cares annoy,
No tyrants vex thy buried boy;
Why mourn for him who smiles on thee?
Dear mother, weep no more for me!

Where angels dwell—in glen and grove—
I sought the flowers which mothers love;
And in my garden I have set
The primrose and the violet:
For thee the wo-marked cowslip grows,
For thee the little daisy blows;
When wilt thou come my flowers to see?
Nay, mother, weep no more for me!

Christ's mother wept on earth for him
When wept in Heaven the Seraphim;
And o'er the Eternal Throne the light
Grew dim, and saddened into night;
But where through bliss Heaven's rivers run
That mother now is with her son.
They miss me there, and wait for thee:
Come, mother, come—why weep for me?

I set a rose our home beside—
I know the poor memorial died—
The frost hath chipped my lettered stone;
My very name from earth is gone.
But in my bower that knows not wo,
The wild hedge rose and woodbine glow,
And red-breasts sing of home to me;
Come, mother, come—we wait for thee!

Like all true men on the earth, Ebenezer Elliott owes an inspiration to the glorious things of the creation. The harmony that makes such music, though springing from what seems the meanest and smallest weed unworthy false-styled wisdom's most passing glance, to him is the voice of God walking in the garden of the world, speaking to all honest and faithful hearts. Putting himself into the situation of a toil-worn boy, he in a lyric strain teaches what the fresh air and ruddy

light can do in driving away all selfishness, while the high mind disregards the long weary months of toil past, and even the to-morrow with the same prospect of cruel labor, inadequately paid, the to-morrows interminably the same. This is the only description. What thoughts, what feelings the pictured scene calls up in the mind of man. This is knowledge, when the effect of the impression reaches to the source of action; otherwise assent is but the nod of dreaming sleep. And then how pious to give a soul to all created things, how immediately consequent from acknowledging their power. From the blood of Ajax there rose a sorrow-marked flower, as if the spirit of the hero yet could warn the nation to which he was once the fortress. In that Grecian camp there must have been honest men, who loved the flowers, and Ajax too. And in like way, the blood of the thousands of starved Englishmen, dried out by famine into the air, moulding itself into a plaintive song, or the perfume of a sad flower, comes from the heart of their brother. This simple poem might express their magnanimous wo.

HOLIDAY.

O blessed when some holiday
Brings townsmen to the moor,
And in the sunbeams brighten up
The sad looks of the poor.
The bee puts on his richest gold,
As if that worker knew
How hardly and for little they
Their sunless tasks pursue.
But from their souls the sense of wrong
On dove-like pinions flies;
And throned o'er all, forgiveness sees
His image in their eyes.
Soon tired, the street-born lad lies down
On marjoram and thyme,
And through his grated fingers sees
The falcon's flight sublime;
Then his pale eyes, so bluely dull,
Grow darkly blue with light,
And his lips redden like the bloom
O'er miles of mountain bright.
The little lovely maiden hair
Turns up its happy face,
And saith unto the poor man's heart
"Thou 'rt welcome to this place."
The infant river leapeth free,
Amid the branches tall,

And cries FOREVER there is ONE
 Who reigneth over all;
 And unto Him, as unto me,
 Thou 'rt welcome to partake
 His gift of light, His gift of air,
 O'er mountain, glen and lake.
 Our Father loves us, want-worn man!
 And know thou this from me:
 The pride that makes thy pain his couch,
 May wake to envy thee.
 Hard, hard to bear are want and toil,
 As thy worn features tell:
 But wealth is armed with fortitude,
 And bears thy sufferings well.

In one of his prefaces, Elliott says that there are many in Sheffield and Birmingham, good poets as he, echoing all his feelings, knowing as he does injustice and forgiveness. It may be so, but it seems that if a score of such spirits dwelt in England, the corn-laws would be dissolved in one peal of scornful laughter. Knowledge alone can guard liberty; on the watch-tower of our governmental Valhalla that watchful ken must be placed, that is sharp of hearing, even to the sound of the growing grass on the mountains, and when the insidious steps of cunning aggression are heard, the horn should waken echoes in every corner of the universe, and call the heroic to battle. Elliott is most learned, as his expression shows,—he modulates the British reed as Crabbe, Byron, Wordsworth, Burns, Milton do. For learning is the learning of such men's modes of expression, not committing the Penny Magazine to memory, or swallowing Aristotle or Locke's theories upon the division of the human mind into bureaux and portfolios of ideas. It is impossible to learn aught but words, and Milton, in copying the mere style, might be considered a plagiarist from Homer. No—the ideas are stamped on the heart by the one Maker, and the only plagiarist is the one who repeats what he does not feel.

Enough has been quoted to awaken love, if you have the heart of a man; indignation, if your imagination can cross the Atlantic to your suffering brethren; and hope and ardent prayer, that this epitaph may long remain uninscribed upon the tombstone of Ebenezer Elliott.

Stop, mortal! here thy brother lies,
 The poet of the Poor.

His books were rivers, woods, and skies,
The meadow and the moor.
His teachers were the torn heart's wail,
The tyrant, and the slave,
The street, the factory, the jail,
The palace, and the grave!
The meanest thing, earth's feeblest worm,
He feared to scorn or hate,
And honored in a peasant's form
The equal of the great.
But if he loved the rich who make
The poor man's little more,
Ill could he praise the rich who take
From plundered labor's store.
A hand to do, a head to plan,
A heart to feel and dare,
Tell man's worst foes, here lies the man
Who drew them as they are.

A.

MISS SEDGWICK'S TRAVELS.*

THE peculiar characteristic of Miss Sedgwick's book, which calls for more particular notice at our hands than we would otherwise give to a traveler's sketch book of the usual hackneyed Continental scenes and adventures, is, its genuine American spirit of observation. In this lies its force and originality. There have been better descriptions of foreign scenery than Miss Sedgwick has here attempted—indeed, she has generally avoided such descriptions altogether, we cannot say to the improvement of her work, for common as such descriptions are, the bare hints she offers are less satisfactory—there are frequently more varied incidents in other books of the kind, the route taken has no charm of novelty; but in a quick ardent sympathy with the real truth of things, an intelligent appreciation of social manners and customs varying from our own, in charity and faith in man of whatever nation, these volumes convey a new source of interest to the reader. Nor is this high moral value without a corresponding literary interest. Though written in the

* Letters from abroad to kindred at home. By the author of Hope Leslie. 2 vols. 12mo. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1841.

form of familiar letters to kindred, and presented to the reader in a negligent undress, the style is marked by neatness and accuracy, and the occasional illustrations exhibit our author's characteristic grace and wealth of fancy.

The two classes of travelers most in vogue, are those who err at opposite extremes; the one with a silly affectation of foreign manners, forgetting their own country and admiring all that bears the stamp of England or Paris; the others, carrying with them a flippant, consequential impertinence, of domestic growth, measure the Thames or the Tiber by the size of the Ohio or Mississippi, judge of the value of an hotel by the hundreds it can accommodate, of the social defects of an Englishman by their own restless sociability, of the morals of a Frenchman by the naked statues in the Louvre, of the virtues of Italians by the depredations of couriers and the inroads of swarms of begging lazzaroni.* With nothing to do with either of these classes, Miss Sedgwick is too much of a reformer at home to be governed by a blind admiration of her own country; she is too much in love with goodness and patriotism everywhere, not to seek them out and reverence them abroad. In whatever can be done for men by free laws and equal government, she is never forgetful of the righteously earned superiority of her own land; in all that God has done for man by implanting in his heart the virtues of contentment and happiness under any government, she adds her tribute of gratitude for the blessing.

The first letter of Miss Sedgwick is dated at Portsmouth, June, 1839, on her arrival in England, and the last about a year afterward, at the commencement of her homeward route from the south of Italy. Little more than a month of

*There is a quiet keen rebuke of this race of travelers, in one of Miss Sedgwick's letters from the Rhine, that we cannot forbear quoting in this place. "We met a countryman, to-day, who has been traveling through France and Italy with his sister, 'without any language,' he says, 'but that spoken on the rock of Plymouth,' which, true to his English blood, he pronounces, with infinite satisfaction, to be the best and all sufficient. He is a fair specimen of that class of Anglo-American travelers who find quite enough particulars, in which every country is inferior to their own, to fill up the field of their observation. He has just crossed the deck to say to me, 'I have let them know what a *tall* place America is; I have told them that an American steamer will carry two thousand people and one thousand bales of cotton, and go down the river *and up* twice as fast as a Rhine steamer.' He has not told them that a Rhine steamer is far superior in its arrangement and refinement to ours."

this period was given to England ; then follows a short stay in Germany, and the remainder of the time was occupied on the road, and in the study of churches, paintings, and antiquities, in the principal cities of Italy.

The first page of the book exhibits Miss Sedgwick's enthusiasm for England. "When I touched English ground," says she, "I could have fallen on my knees and kissed it"—and thenceforward, wherever there is a chance for praise, all is represented in a glowing rose-colored medium. Our author's love for flowers and the neatness of a well managed domestic economy, is unbounded. The Isle of Wight, the miniature of English garden scenery, that she first visited, in its quaint churches, its cottages, and out of door plants, presents her with the reality of the images she had conceived at home as the ideal of cultivated country life. The first impression to an American landed from the confinement of ship-board amidst such scenes is, that he is walking through a gallery of pictures. In the long progress of refinement and taste united to wealth for many ages, with the softening influences of a delightful summer climate, every object has long since assumed its appropriate place and relative position. Art has been the hand-maiden of time, and all has grown up together into a delicious beauty. There is no sense of awkwardness or incompleteness in half finished villages, or consciousness of future effort to replace with improvements unsightly and inappropriate houses, as in the rude country towns of America. Miss Sedgwick's sketches of English rural scenery are full of enjoyment. "History, painting, poetry," she says, "are at every moment becoming real, actual." The way-side pictures, the transient glimpses of fine scenery, illuminated by the personal feeling of the authoress and the enthusiasm of her companions, are to us, next to the quick moral perceptions of individual and social character—for man must ever precede nature—the finest portions of the volumes. Such is the beautiful incident in Bon Churchyard, a picture ready sketched for the pencil of Chapman. "Bon Church, at a short distance from the road, secluded from it by an interposing elevation, enclosed by a stone wall, and surrounded by fine old trees, their bark coated with moss, is, to a New World eye, a picture 'come to life.' 'Sixteen hundred and sixteen,' said I to L., deciphering a date on a monument ; 'four years before there were any white inhabitants in Massachusetts.' 'Then,' she

replied, 'this is an Indian's grave.' Her eyes were bent on the ground. She was in her own land; she looked up and saw the old arched and ivied gateway, and smiled—the illusion had vanished."

When our authoress arrives in London, she visits the usual localities, and, considering her short residence, is fortunate in meeting many of the prominent lions of the metropolis. Her sketches of the latter are very spirited. We have heard these allusions to individuals objected to; but in the hands of Miss Sedgwick, with her sense of social courtesy and judicious manner of narrative, our only regret is that there are not more of them. It can do no one any harm that she has mentioned the curiosities, autographs, and hospitality of Rogers, the overflowing talk of Macaulay, that she has transmitted a fresh oracular saying from the lips of Carlyle, or commemorated his first acquaintance with Emerson. It is surely a privilege to learn that Sidney Smith continues to let off his fireworks of brilliant wit in conversation, and it cannot injure Mrs. Norton to unite her with our ideas of ancient sculpture, and exhibit her "a most queenly-looking creature, a Semiramis, a Sappho, or an Amazon—the Greek ideal Amazon, uniting masculine force with feminine delicacy—or anything that expresses the perfection of intellectual and physical beauty." The sentiment that raises objections to such details, is over-strained and over-delicate. There is a difference, it must be allowed, between the liberty of private conversation and the freedom of publication in print; but the principle in both cases ought to be the same. Where private confidence is not betrayed, the names of individuals of sufficient importance to the public may be brought forward, and such anecdotes freely related of them as charity, good sense, and the love of truth may permit. The privilege of thus entering upon matters of some delicacy, should be used with caution—it is one that should be carefully watched: the tale-bearer or the notoriety-monger are indeed never to be allowed: but, within proper limits, the public has a right to information of the life and habits of an author or a statesman who puts himself forward to live upon their favor. Concerning the lives of private individuals, the Smiths, Johnsons and Thompsons, it is surely an impertinence to interfere with them at all, and it is a still greater impertinence to trouble the public with the least portion of their inglorious affairs. Objections to the reports of the witty sayings of authors and

the eccentricities of men of genius, are much oftener the solicitude of those little minds, sharing neither wit nor genius, than the anxieties of the great themselves—as ladies of a certain age are said to be far more jealous of their reputation than maiden nymphs in the height of bloom and beauty. There is one point of view in which, at first sight, a similar objection appears to be less easily answerable. It is the frequent use of initials, scattered over the pages, referring not only to members of her own party, but to strangers and traveling acquaintances. The references to personages at home in the same way surprise us—but we remember these are private letters, in which such allusions are natural, and the public are only admitted to their perusal by special favor; a plea that in case of a lady, and that lady Miss Sedgwick, we are very ready to receive. The compliments and sayings thus introduced are a matter of interest, perhaps of pride, to the parties named; to the rest of the world the initials stand for mere *dramatis personæ*, the personages of a dialogue.

Less pardonable in our view of the matter than Miss Sedgwick's treatment of the animated lions of London, is her hasty immature judgment of St. Paul's. There are very few blots like this upon her volumes. "I was grievously disappointed in St. Paul's. I early got, from some school book, I believe, an impression that it was a model of architecture, that Sir Christopher Wren was a divine light among artists, and sundry other false notions. It stands in the heart of the city of London, and is so defaced, and absolutely blackened by its coal smoke, that you would scarcely suspect it to be of that beautiful material white marble. *A more heavy inexpressive mass can hardly be found cumbering the ground.* It takes time and infinite pains, depend on't, to educate the Saxon race out of their natural inaptitude in matters of taste. As you stand within and under the dome, the effect is very grand and beautiful. The statues here and at Westminster struck me as monstrous and even curious productions, for an age when Grecian art was extant, or, indeed, for any age; for there is always the original model, the human form. The artists have not taken man for their model, but the *English* man, of whom grace can scarcely be predicated, and the Englishman, too, in his national, and sometimes in his hideous military costume." We are strongly inclined to believe that Miss Sedgwick never fully saw St. Paul's, it being in truth a difficult matter to get a

full view, or form a comprehensive notion of that wonderful pile. Our fair writer may have first approached St. Paul's in a cab or been rudely jostled by the crowd of Ludgate Hill; she certainly had not the time or patience to let that venerable building grow upon her heart in steady love and admiration. St. Paul's is most typical of London and the English: its ponderous base and towers are images of the firmly cemented ground-work and strength of English individual and social character. Its blackened and discolored sides with great patches of white, are not out of harmony with the sad and gay life that has flowed beneath its walls in ill-assorted union for ages. Its bulk alone is an image of gigantic greatness. If London is destined ever to perish and be conquered by time, the destroyer of cities, its huge fragments will be perpetual as the walls of the Coliseum at Rome. But we can figure to ourselves no such resemblances of decay.

If this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble.

St. Paul's is truly the most expressive work in London. Standing as it does, at the very centre and summit of the city, the Acropolis as it were, it would not be fairly exchanged for the most graceful edifice of ancient or modern times, for the Madeleine at Paris or the Parthenon at Athens. From the central point beneath the dome at its very foundation where repose the ashes of Nelson, to the summit of the cross, its crypt, its choir, its ancient library, a chamber built out of its solid walls, its beautiful dome that seems ever rising with the grace of a balloon springing aloft in the air, its monuments and sculpture, it is grand and significant. The gilded cross in early morning, may be seen touched by the rays of the sun, while even the dome is hidden in the fog that lies outstretched over the highest houses around. The bright line of light suddenly looked upon, has the effect of lightning. An edifice capable of such phenomena can hardly be inexpressive or cumber the ground.

What Miss Sedgwick means by objecting to artists taking the *English* man for their model we cannot conceive. At St. Paul's, Flaxman, in his figure of Nelson, must needs

represent the faded form, the fallen sightless eye, and cover as best he may with a military cloak the armless shoulder of the hero, without reference to the perfection of Grecian elegance and grace, and truly Dr. Johnson, except a slight leaning towards the Farnese Hercules, must for aught we can see stand as he is represented at the corner of the transept, in the heavy guise of an unwieldy plethoric Englishman. Miss Sedgwick extends her remarks to Westminster Abbey, but surely she must have overlooked the labors of Flaxman there assembled, instinct with beauty, of Westmacott, of Roubillac.

There are many domestic and some political topics slightly touched upon by our traveler in the remarks upon England, and many home thrusts for which we have known a great American satirist to be severely handled, but which coming from this source, are likely to do much good. These we could willingly dwell upon, did we not remember that space and time in this world are limited, and that we have yet a goodly volume and a half to travel over.

Next to England, Germany, for its many warm hearted traits of domestic life, and constitutional benevolence, is dearest to our authoress. If there is one subject more frequent than another in the writings of Miss Sedgwick, it is that of the charms of cheerfulness. Where people are contented and happy, goodness is indeed not far off, for these are its outward insignia. In the simple living and plain manners of the Germans, the absence of obsequiousness, the prevalent good nature, our authoress saw many a reality that might have been modelled upon the ideal portraits in her own books. She thus concludes her observations upon this point: "I feel richer for the delightful recollections I carry with me of the urbanity of the Germans. Never can I forget the 'Gutentag,' 'Guten abend,' and 'Gute nacht,' (good day, good evening, and good night) murmured by the soft voices of the peasants from under their drooping loads, as we passed them in our walks. Addison says that the general salutations of his type of all benignity, Sir Roger de Coverley, came from the 'overflowings of humanity'—so surely did these. On the whole, the Germans seem to me the most rational people I have seen. We never 'are' but always 'to be blessed.' They enjoy the present, and, with the truest economy of human life,

make the most of the materials of contentment that God has given them."

Mingled with notes of such objects as presented themselves to the travelers in Northern Italy, are frequent allusions to Spielberg and the Italian refugees to the United States. She carried letters from the latter, to their friends and relatives in Italy. Silvio Pellico she saw, "a little man more shadowy than Dr. Channing, a mere etching of a man." She finely compares the snow covered Alps to Austrian tyranny, an image of chilling despotic power brooding over the beautiful plains of Italy.

The Italian letters are the least interesting of the whole. Though they are brief and many travelers' common places are avoided, yet they are somewhat drily filled up with names of pictures, details of ceremonies, and ruins. We have nothing new respecting the manners or society. Two of the most interesting pages are devoted to Crawford and Greenough. The former, at Rome, she commends to the support of his countrymen, "while there is yet some faith and generosity in doing so." The statue of Washington by the latter, she saw at Florence; it has now arrived in this country, soon to be placed in the capitol. With the relish of these noble American names fresh on our page we leave our authoress—who, wherever she travels, bears with her a noble spirit of charity and sympathy, without which every literary undertaking is vain, a love of country, inspiring a love of all men, nowhere better taught, we may deduce from this example, than from the American soil.

P

OLD MERRYTHOUGHT.

WHO does not regret, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, that we hear not more of Christopher Sly; that his flagging attention so soon drops off at the acting of that memorable comedy, leaving us with only a taste of that beer-nurtured vagabond conversation, with which he entertained Marian Hacket the fat ale-wife of Wincott and her maid Cicely, in default of better compensation for his increasing unpaid reckoning. In the passing humors of

Catherine and Petruchio, there was surely something that might have awakened his drowsiness and prevailed even over the omnipotent small pots of ale that he loved. But Shakespeare made it otherwise, and gave us only the prelude of his merry talk, instead of a running commentary that would have afforded many witty contrasts between the romantic life of Italy, and the coarse home-fed humors of such an every-day English character as Christopher Sly. The few touches betray the hand of Shakespeare, indeed, and have made the poor devil ale drinking tinker a proverb, but we could have desired more of him. The Dramatist so seldom drew from the actual English life of his own day that for this reason too we might have wished the picture more complete. The by-play of this character in lordly-drunken new-awakened dignity at the side of the stage would have been well received by the audience. The comedy, indeed, off the stage, even within the circle of the pit and boxes, has its humors often not less than among the actors, with the additional advantage that what on the stage is feigned, off it is genuine. Who as he sits in the pit of the theatre by the side of some substantial grocer or plain country farmer, does not listen with a relish to his side-remarks or watch the very turns of his countenance to catch the image of the mirror held up to nature? The audience has often more of Hogarth than the stage. If the reader would enjoy the sight of honest hearty mirth-streaked faces, a joyous comic picture to be hung up in the chamber of memory, let him glance along one of the benches of the pit when Hackett has full possession of the house, or Chapman is playing off as in a kaleidoscope, those humorous repetitions of himself. In an English theatre, this enjoyment is enhanced where bevies of simple uneducated women, with unchecked tears for tragedy and illimitable laughter for farce, nestle on the benches. Then pass commentaries on Shakespeare that would puzzle Malone, and perversions of the text that would wither the emphasis of Macready—did he hear them.

Even such a scene is passing in Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of the Knight of the Burning Pestle, where the chance topics and conversation of the times are bright and animated to this very day, the small talk and timidity of an old London housewife are preserved encrusted on the text of the play as perfect specimens, and if human nature be anything, a great deal more curious and interesting than the most

vaunted trilobite or geological formation extant. While men of science are examining with microscopes the serrated back of some antediluvian insect, we may glance at the philosophical traits of the citizen's wife, of the days of Elizabeth, without risk of impeachment. She is a notable woman in her way, just what an uneducated woman with the difference of manners is at this day, or rather with such an education as the mere necessary facts and circumstances of every day life, without more recondite instruction, are apt to beget. What literal simplicity there is in such minds—what an apparent affectation of ignorance—a seeming independent rejection of all grammatical or ornamental learning. In spite of the march of mind, a homely housewife in Chatham street is quite the same now, under the burden of a few old fashioned daily domestic avocations, with our citizen's wife of Cheapside.

The Knight of the Burning Pestle is a burlesque rhapsody. The epilogue is disturbed by a London citizen and his wife, quite out of patience with the caricatures of city life, brought upon the stage, and who recommend their own apprentice, Ralph, to play the grocer, do all sorts of adventurous acts, and especially kill a lion with a pestle. Ralph is handed up on the boards, and in the mock heroic quixotism of the authors, assumes a burning pestle, a badge of his grocership for his shield. The play goes on with burlesque love-making and plots and counter plots. The light nonsensical tone of the play is peculiarly characteristic of Beaumont and Fletcher. Shakespeare could not have written it. He could not have descended so low. When he has attempted similar scenes, as in the player's company of Nick Bottom, the weaver, the comic invention is just and deeply charged with the weightiest moral reflection. His very trifles are philosophical. The highest effort of Beaumont and Fletcher in this instance, is to raise a laugh at the ridiculous. These authors had the good will of their audience and were never loth to use their privilege of a jest at the expense of Shakespeare. Thus Ralph begins by trying his voice on a passage of Hotspur, "By Heaven, methinks it were an easy leap, &c.," and at the conclusion of the play, parodies the address of Henry V. to the soldiers at Harfleur. Our modern reverence for the poet, does not lightly brook these contemporary impertinences. Shakespeare, to enjoy his fame, should awake *now*.

The pride in the city wife for the apprentice is humorously jealous of his honor. Her impatience for his coming on the stage, is only exceeded by her regret at his leaving it ; when Ralph gets well beaten, like Don Quixotte in similar emergencies, she attributes it to enchantment, and threatens the parties with the police. The good wife talks with wondrous fluency : her husband she calls "good lamb," and receives the endearing appellation of "mouse." The latter was not an uncommon epithet of affection as we see in the letters of Alleyn, the player and founder of Dulwich college, who writes thus encouragingly to his wife. Ralph talks of conquering giants, and wonders the armies of fourteen or fifteen hundred thousand men are no longer employed against them. "Faith, husband, and Ralph says true, for they say the king of Portugal cannot sit at his meat, but the giants and the ettins will come and snatch it from him." The credulity of those days had something romantic in it : ignorance still gapes and wonders, but its marvels and its poetry of belief are gone. Tobacco was then a novelty, and gentlemen smoked it at the theatre, a circumstance which produces an angry expostulation from our talkative dame. "Fy ! this stinking tobacco kills men ! would there were none in England ! Now I pray, gentlemen, what good does this stinking tobacco do you ? nothing, I warrant you ; make chimnies o' your faces !" When violins are introduced at the close of an act, she calls up more of her popular admirable small talk. "Hark, fiddles, fiddles ! now surely they go finely. They say 't is present death for these fiddlers to tune their rebecks before the great Turk's grace ; is 't not George !" So gossips our citizen's wife to the end of the play, interrupting the action, disturbing the sentiment and adding to the humor ; and her sayings are some of the best on the stage, for they form a rich antiquarian picture of the tradesman's manners and topics of those poetic times when chivalry long before on its decline, yet lingered in the images and proverbs of the popular mind.

Old Merrythought is the best among the personages of this neglected play—which like most of Beaumont and Fletcher's indelicate productions deserves its fate. The comedies of that period too often resemble the poisoned Italian dishes of the same age, out which there is no little difficulty to gather the plums and sound meat, and avoid the infection. But Old Merrythought has too much that is

honest and natural in him to shrink from an introduction to the most fastidious modern society. His merriment is medicinal, and purges the soul of the diseases that gather around it in this world of harsh realities. If his humor is impossible to some minds, it is not the less credible to others. He is just such a character as would grow out of the airy lightness, the wit bordering on extravaganza, of Beaumont and Fletcher: a gay, careless, well-fed, fortune-cherished old fellow singing scraps of ballads and songs all day long, and sporting his merry philosophy between the intervals of eating and drinking. He is in league with fortune and knows it. He is an etherealized vagabond, a thriftless ne'er do well, a character that Crabbe would have off to the workhouse in a twinkling, the very poetry of improvident good nature. He is a reality of the world of might be's—a citizen of that country where the clouds are curtains, the forests houses, the rivers flow wine and "*macaroni an parmesan* grows in the fields." He has an unlimited faith in his own happiness. He lives in a perpetual security of animal food and home comforts. His next day's dinner is as sure to rise as the sun. Compare this English "sober certainty of waking bliss," with the contingencies of a meal in Spain, as exhibited in the old hungry Spanish novels. Such a character could not exist far from the ribs of beef and ale of old England. A delightful picture of a merry careless old age. Humor of this kind is natural enough, though it exists but seldom. We would prove it from the very contradictions of human life. It is a common reproach that old age is avaricious, timid, chilling: in the intellectual destitution of that too often barren period, when the soul, tired of her long residence in the body, leaves it with the best part of her retinue before death, mean fears enter and take possession: some lord of a thousand acres sits cowering over a few embers, lest he should want a stick of wood to warm him before he dies—for the honor of human nature, we have sometimes too the other extreme, and age is careless, prodigal, boisterously merry. There are old boys as well as childish men. Real life, like the drama, has its Old Merrythought as well as its Sir Giles Overreach.

TALFOURD'S DEFENCE OF MOXON.*

THE recent prosecution of Mr. Moxon, the London publisher, for a libel upon the Christian religion, under the laws of England, by the publication of a complete edition of Shelley's writings, from the celebrity of the parties interested, has something more than a passing interest. The cause itself is of little consequence, for there was no great principle brought in question in the English courts, the law itself not being discussed. And in this country it is of still less, for a similar prosecution is not likely to arise here, and probably, whatever the nature of the law against gross immoralities and disturbances of the public peace in matters of religion, would not be supported by an intelligent jury. The very work indicted, the *Notes to Queen Mab*, (chiefly containing the objectionable passages), has long circulated in this country, both as a separate infidel tract and as a portion of the library edition of the works of the distinguished poet. Yet no public prosecution has ever been undertaken. The principles of an intelligent free community are against such prosecutions in the most aggravated case, and even on considerations of policy, there is no evil religion can suffer from such stealthy publications that would not be enhanced a hundred fold by the notoriety, and so called persecution of a public trial. In the form these portions of Shelley were published by Mr. Moxon, an inconsiderable portion of his entire works, they were harmless; evil, it is true, in their original design, but in the after writings of Shelley they bear with them a sure antidote. In a world of mingled good and evil, they are at worst the errors of a misguided mind, and least of all as they were published deserved to be singled out for their deformity.

This, probably, was well understood by all parties, prosecutor, advocate, judge, jury, and publisher. Mr. Moxon was convicted, but he fell a victim to precedents and the respect for an established law. The prosecution seems to have been undertaken without enmity, with the least possible sense of

* Speech for the defendant, in the prosecution of the Queen v. Moxon, for the publication of Shelley's Works. Delivered in the Court of Queen's Bench, June 23, 1841, and revised by T. N. Talfourd, Sergeant at Law. London: Moxon. 8vo., pp. 58.

justice, merely to throw the law itself into disrepute. It was commenced by a Mr. Hetherington, who had been imprisoned for a libel upon the Old Testament, by the sale of certain infidel publications at the price of a penny. He had conducted his own defence, advancing the right to publish all matters of opinion; he was sentenced to pass four months in the Queen's Bench prison. To exhibit the folly of the law by a practical *reductio ad absurdum*, he set on foot the indictment of several of the most eminent London publishers for the sale of Shelley's works: and the result, in spite of the elaborate eloquence of Talfourd, has justified his expectations. The defence of Talfourd rests mainly on the ground that the passages are historical, that they are part of the recorded experience of a great mind, that the lesson they inculcate is obvious, the perversion of a lofty intellect, that they fairly belong to the knowledge and wisdom of the world. "When the greatness of the poet's intellect," pleads the advocate, "contains within itself the elements of tumult and disorder—when the appreciation of the genius, in all its divine relations and all its human lapses, depends on a view of the entire picture, must it be withheld? It is not a sinful elysium, full of lascivious blandishments, but a heaving chaos of mighty elements, that the publisher of the early productions of Shelley unveils. In such a case, the more awful the alienation, the more pregnant with good will be the lesson. Shall this life, fevered with beauty, restless with inspiration, be hidden; or, wanting its first blind but gigantic efforts, be falsely, because partially, revealed? If to trace back the stream of genius, from its greatest and most lucid earthly breadth to its remotest fountain, is one of the most interesting and instructive objects of philosophic research, shall we—when we have followed that of Shelley through its majestic windings, beneath the solemn glooms of 'The Cenci,' through the glory-tinged expanses of 'The Revolt of Islam,' amidst the dream-like haziness of the 'Prometheus'—be forbidden to ascend with painful steps its narrowing course to its furthest spring, because the black rocks may encircle the spot whence it rushes into day, and demon shapes—frightful but powerless for harm—may gleam and frown on us beside it?"

This is evidently the true ground of defence; for it covers the large class of similar cases, and protects a great portion of every library, even of many of those works the most com-

mon and familiar. On this ground the appeal should have been successful with a special jury, for there was probably not a single member of it who did not act from this very principle in admitting to his shelves the pruriencies, the irreligion and contempt of many classic authors. If the instances cited by Talfourd had been more frequent and drawn from more familiar sources, his speech would have been more effective. One of the chief illustrations is *Clarissa Harlowe* (which is termed, with a rather backward taste for English literature, "the greatest of all prose romances,") that was pure enough to teach Hannah More her first lessons of piety, and licentious enough in parts to justify the supervision of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. Nothing could be more remote or far-fetched than this. The cause that must seek its arguments at such a distance, it may be plausibly inferred is a weak one. Of a similar inefficiency was the inference drawn from Milton's character of Satan. In the poetical aggrandizement of that arch fiend, it was urged Milton had conferred a wealth of imagery, a strength and energy of language, that, isolated from the context, set forth glaring expressions of blasphemy, and, colored with the specialties of an indictment, might equal the alleged impieties of Shelley. But this was a comparison that, as Lord Coke would have remarked, does not run on all fours. It is essentially imperfect. Milton labored like an artist, and in one and the same work represented the powers of good superior to the powers of evil, never confounds right and wrong in the mind of the reader, never transcends the license of Scripture itself in his portrait of an angel, powerful enough to make, as we are told in the Revelations, "war in heaven." But the object of Shelley was to preach error, wilfully or ignorantly it mattered not, and it was probably evident to the simplest juryman that the case of *Queen Mab* and *Paradise Lost* could not, by any possibility of logic, be rendered alike.

Of a higher order of philosophy were the orator's remarks on the nature of poetry herself; that the poet must speak the truth; that his art cannot lie, for it is "*Eternity revealing itself in Time!*" *

* We quote this passage entire :—

"The poetry which pretends to a denial of God or of an immortal life, MUST contain its own refutation in itself, and sustain what it would deny! A

Such were the main topics of the defence. We gratefully take advantage of the closing appeal in behalf of Mr. Moxon personally to reiterate our thanks, in the name of the readers we represent, to a publisher associated in our minds with so much that is enduring and graceful in English literature. The goodly volumes of the British dramatists brought within the means of the poor student, offer a temple to the fame of any publisher, where the worshippers and choral singers are the readers, in silence and aloud reciting the musical passages of the poets. With such associations the most avaricious aspirant for fame may be glad to dwell. That good fortune and prosperity may attend upon fame, is the least portion of the good wishes of Mr. Moxon's friends in America.

7

Poet, though never one of the highest order, may "link vice to a radiant angel;" he may diffuse luxurious indifference to virtue and to truth; but he cannot inculcate atheism. Let him strive to do it, and like Balaam, who came to curse, like him he must end in blessing! His art convicts him; for it is "*Eternity revealing itself in Time!*" His fancies may be wayward, his theories absurd, but they will prove, no less in their failure than in their success, the divinity of their origin, and the inadequacy of this world to give scope to his impulses. They are the beatings of the soul against the bars of its clay tenement, which though they may ruffle and sadden it, prove that it is winged for a diviner sphere! Young has said, "An undevout astronomer is mad;" how much more truly might he have said, an atheist poet is a contradiction in terms! Let the poet take what range of associations he will—let him adopt what notions he may—he cannot dissolve his alliance with the Eternal. Let him strive to shut out the vistas of the Future by encircling the Present with images of exquisite beauty; his own forms of ideal grace will disappoint him with eternal looks, and vindicate the immortality they were fashioned to veil! Let him rear temples, and consecrate them to fabled divinities, they will indicate in their enduring beauty "Temples not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!" If he celebrates the delights of social intercourse, the festal reference to their fragility includes the sense of that which must endure; for the very sadness which tempers them speaks the longing after that "which prompts the eternal sigh." If he desires to bid the hearts of thousands beat as one man at the touch of tragic passion, he must present "the future in the instant,"—show in the death-grapple of contending emotions a strength which death cannot destroy—vindicate the immortality of affection at the moment when the warm passages of life are closed against it—and anticipate in the virtue which dares to die, the power by which "mortality shall be swallowed up of life!" The world is too narrow for us. Time is too short for man,—and the poet only feels the sphere more inadequate, and pants for the "all hail hereafter," with more urgent sense of weakness than his fellows:—

Too—too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital heat too cold; these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
For any passion of the soul which leads
To ecstasy, and all the frigid bonds
Of time and change disdaining, takes her range
Along the line of limitless desires!

THE LOITERER.

An Address, pronounced before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Union College at Schenectady, on Monday, July 27th, 1841. By WILLIAM KENT. New York: Printed by James Van Norden & Co. 1841.

A single page of the present discourse exhibits as pernicious an error—as wide a departure from vital truth—as any that has fallen under our observation since the establishment of this Journal. The doctrine there set forth is, in brief, that we are to tolerate all evil for the sake of the good involved in it. A single carat of silver is to give currency to the basest alloy that was ever coined at the mint of untruth, disorder and heresy. Out of this most dangerous proposition, the writer derives encouragement for such as have of late made themselves busy to procure an appropriation of the school fund to their own particular and sectarian service. “He” says the author, alluding to this universal philanthropist, so potent in evoking a good spirit from things evil, “He may not prefer the Catholics; but having them among us, he may think it best to educate them: and if they will not accept education, except in their own way and from their own teachers, even to let them so receive it, rather than not receive it at all.” In reply to this dogma, and as friends of an undivided fund, we say—in the first place—Catholics, as Catholics, are not known to our institutions, and it is flagrant arrogance for them or their advocates to assume to themselves, as they do by these claims, an independent rank and station in the community. As citizens, if they have any amendments to propose, any reforms to further, the Government has an ear and will hearken: otherwise it is and should be as deaf as the pillars of the Capitol. Secondly, while we, the friends of a fund, are exercising a portion of the delightful charity and forbearance inculcated by Mr. Kent, any clamorous petitioner that chances in our vicinity, may pluck from us whatever of our rights, our common properties and privileges he may condescend to be pleased with.

The true moderation is not the negative and paralytic virtue taught in these pages: it is an active, manly quality: seeing error, convicting it in the open face of day, of deformities and plague spots, but forbearing to press the point of truth beyond a necessary and healthful severity: withholding the hand from a foe at bay, but letting shine full upon him the serene light of truth, and assuaging ignorance and false opinion, by wholesome applications of right and justice.

Whatever truth any man has in him, let him utter it aloud, in all seasonable times and places; provided it be truth, as most truths are, affecting individual happiness or the good of the world.

This is not the age for men to sleep in: to fold their arms and preach a dumb tolerance and a blind charity. The present times have not adopted Momus as their instructor.

Thy sword within the scabbard keep,
And let mankind agree;
Better the world were fast asleep,
Than kept awake by thee.
The fools are only thinner,
With all our cost and care;
But neither side a winner,
For things are as they were.

Dryden's Secular Masque.

It is an age when all men are enlisted, going forth with the trumpet to promulgate truth, bearing arms to do battle in her service, or else, by a patient performance of duty in quiet stations, serving her also as they stand and wait. No Luther, no Hampden, no Warren, or Adams was ever stirred to take a part in the great cause of mankind by having a false moderation sounded in his ear. The cause of enlightened and energetic right, and a wise and manly forbearance are one.

M

Memoirs of Edward Alleyn, founder of Dulwich College: including some new particulars respecting Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Massinger, Marston, Dekker, &c. By J. PAYNE COLLIER, Esq., F. S. A. London: Printed for the Shakespeare Society. 1841. 8vo., pp. 219.

There are few monuments, even in England, where the interests of the past and present are so happily united, as in the associations of Dulwich. The thoughts of the visitor to that beautiful portion of the environs of London, are insensibly led to the days of Shakspeare, when Alleyn, its proprietor, was his companion, by a quaint time-honored building, retired from the road and surrounded by a cheerful lawn and garden, said to have been erected after the designs of Inigo Jones. This is Dulwich College. Here a contemporary of the great dramatist, who enjoys the fame of having been the first actor of his day, who personated Lear, and Henry VIII, and Romeo, retired from the activity of the great world, relinquished the celebrity of the stage and the delight of admiring audiences, when such reputation was held in

honor, and in the religious spirit of the best men of his age, devoted his maturest days, and a fortune the fruits of his whole life, to the building of a hospital and the care of a few old men and women and poor children. The work yet survives, every stone instinct with the good purpose and intention of its founder. Its aspect of quiet and old English beauty soothes the heart, disturbed by the toil and vexing cares of the great city—as it presents the image of the peaceful well-governed life of the substantial citizen of the days of Elizabeth. Some such thoughts of the permanency and air of placid enjoyment connected with this spot, doubtless influenced a modern benefactor, Sir Francis Bourgeois, when he bequeathed to the College the choice gallery of pictures, the present real attraction of Dulwich, greater than any association with the past; for it is the home of the great painters in their works, where the living meet to honor their divine conceptions of poetry and art.

The volume whose title we have placed at the head of this article, is the first publication of the Shakespeare Society, the plan and objects of which we noticed in a previous number. It is a somewhat dry antiquarian account of the life of Alleyn, taken from MSS preserved at Dulwich. The original papers are given at length, and the least important of them are valuable to the accurate study of our early dramatic literature. The compiler, Mr. Collier, is the author of a history of the English stage to the time of Shakespeare.

The chief events of Alleyn's life we have already glanced at. He became rich as the owner of theatrical property, out of the profits of which he founded his *College of God's Gift*. He commenced life poor, the son of an inn-keeper, and the circumstances of his prosperity from a similar source, throw light on the latter wealthy days of Shakespeare. In his personal habits he was a staid, domestic, home-loving man. He was a lover of music, and performed upon the lute. In the arrangements of his College he made special provision for an organist.* He bore a dignified deportment and good person, that qualified him for the serious parts of tragedy. It is certain that he took the part of Barabbas, in Marlowe's *Rich Jew of Malta*. He gained the applause and enjoyed the acquaintance of Ben Jonson, who has left a memorial of him in his epigrams.

*The love of music was one of the finest traits of his day. "At that period and earlier," says Mr. Collier, "a lute, a gittern, or a cittern, were ordinarily part of the furniture of every barber's shop, in order that the customers, who were waiting for their turn, might amuse themselves with it."

'Tis just, that who did give
So many poets life, by one should live.

The chief facts regarding Shakespeare, preserved by Mr. Collier, are found in several theatrical licenses, and establish the fact of Shakespeare's residence in London at various particular dates; but there is one allusion preserved in a letter to Alleyn from his wife, exhibiting the dramatist in a little incident as an every-day acquaintance, a man who might drop in of a morning and be consulted on a small point of private or domestic economy. It seems that in the absence of Alleyn, there came a youth, one Mr. Francis Chaloner, to his wife, with the request of a loan of ten pounds, referring to the personal knowledge of Mr. Shakespeare. Shakespeare came in afterwards, said that he knew him not, only he heard of him that he was a great rogue, and expressed himself glad he did not get the money!

There is a letter of Peele, the dramatist, remaining, in which Shakespeare and Alleyn are brought together at the Globe, exhibiting a pleasant literary altercation, not free from a spice of littleness on the part of Alleyn, but admirably cleared up by the wit of Ben Jonson. "We were all very merry at the Globe," writes Peele to a friend, "when Ned Alleyn did not scruple to affirm pleasantly to thy friend Will, that he had stolen his speech about the qualities of an actor's excellency in Hamlet his Tragedy, from conversations manifold which had passed between them and opinions given by Alleyn touching the subject. Shakespeare did not take this talk in good sort; but Jonson put an end to the strife by wittily remarking, *This affair needeth no contention; you stole it from Ned, no doubt; do not marvel: Have you not seen him act times out of number?*"

Among the miscellaneous portions of the memoirs is a copy of Wotton's celebrated lines, "The Happy Life," found with the Dulwich papers in Ben Jonson's hand-writing. Ben Jonson, according to Drummond of Hawthornden, had these verses by heart. The copy varies slightly from the one usually printed: we give it in its exact form with the old spelling.

How happy is he borne and taught,
That serveth not another's will!
Whose armor is his honest thought,
And silly truth his highest skill.

Whose passions not his Masters are,
Whose soule is still prepar'd for death,
Untied to the world with care
Of princes' grace or vulgar breath.

Who hath his life from humors freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;

Whose state can neyther flatterers feed,
Nor ruine make accusers great.

Who envieth none whom chance doth rayse,
Or vice ; who never understood
How swordes give slighter wounds than prayse,
Nor rules of state but rules of good.

Who God doth late and early pray
More of his grace, then guifts to lend ;
And entertaynes the harmlesse day
With a well-chosen booke or freind.

This man is free from servile bandes
Of hope to rise or feare to fall ;
Lord of himselfe, though not of landes,
And having nothing, yet hath all.

The Idler in France. By THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON. 2
vols. 12mo. Philadelphia : Carey & Hart. 1841.

This is an agreeable, gossiping, superficial book, the journal of the thoughts, daily habits, and social intercourse of Lady Blessington. The reflections have no great depth, neither have the characters upon whom they are written ; the habits, domestic and literary, are such as we may suppose to have been enjoyed in Paris by the ladies who gave tone to the parties of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, with the allowance of different manners and a mixture of the good sense and wider sympathies of the present day. Lady Blessington looks at every object in the point of view it presents itself from her station in society ; out of that narrow horizon she sees but little. Within her circle her observations are acute. She writes well of the laws of dress, of good manners, of so called good society. She is susceptible to the charms of fashion united to sense and feeling. What is often a superfluity in high life—she has a heart. She values the charms of personal accomplishment, and detects the first wrinkles of age in her companions with a sigh ; she is conscious of her own reign of beauty, and knows full well, an amiable truth which she practices, that the pursuits of literature and the cultivation of society, are the best amends for the loss of youth. In her own sphere, this book presents the fair authoress to us in an agreeable light. It exhibits a native kindness of heart, with the acquisitions of a mind taught by experience, and furnished from the stores of books and travel.

The motive power of Organic Life, and Magnetic phenomena of terrestrial and planetary motions, with the application of the ever-active and all pervading agency of Magnetism, to the nature, symptoms and treatment of Chronic Diseases. BY HENRY HALL SHERWOOD, M. D. New York : H. A. Chapin & Co. 138 Fulton Street. 1841.

THE medical profession have peculiar notions, and an internal police, which though it has allowed theorising as far as love of investigation might urge, has restrained from a practice, that should claim to be grounded on a distinctive or more perfect system than that usually followed. For any one to hint that his was a more certain means of cure, than possessed by the faculty, draws down an instant bull of excommunication. Whether the author has fallen into this grievous plight, and how far the publication of his theory relieves him, is needless to inquire. At all events the doctor appeals to the judgment seat of the reading world to establish and pass upon his discoveries ; and to reward attention he would enlighten us upon the recondite causes of life, animate motion, and even the motion of the planets and the stars, and the laws of the same. In the first half of the volume the doctor proceeds to draw and demonstrate the correctness of his notion, that the human organism is a sort of magnetic machine. He cites the discoveries and investigations of Bell, Magendie, Bichat, into the functions and appearance of the nervous system and brain, and the text is illustrated by a score of lithographic plates of nerves and various sections of the brain. But the text seems to cast but a reflected ray upon the end proposed to be proven. The doctor shows that the centres, or poles of sensation and judgment are situated in the cerebrum or fore-brain, those of motion and reproduction, (on which latter instinct we have a lecture by Broussais, in order to popularise) in the back pain and spinal marrow. The ganglionic involuntary or vegetative life has as many centres or poles as there are ganglia in the body, which act by a will underived from the cerebral brain, and unperceived by the intellect, in secret, build and conserve the fabric of the body. On the seventy-third page is the explanation of masculine action. The coat of each muscle secretes on each of its two surfaces a different fluid, and becomes a galvanic machine. To quote the doctor's words. "Every muscle is covered with a membrane, the outer surface of which has a serous, and the inner a mucous surface ; hence the membranes are called muco-serous membranes. All the different surfaces then like those of the skin, and membranes of other parts of the body, are covered with different kinds of matter, presenting to-

gether immense surfaces, from which constantly issue two forces of different kinds. 'These forces,' he continues below, "are therefore conducted from the skin and membraneous surfaces and concentrated in the brain to form poles, or a motive power to put in motion this apparently complicated yet really simple machinery."

We get thus, as far as the galvanic battery, but how the electricity by attraction or repulsion produces motion, after forming poles, the doctor seems to have forgotten to give us. Now in the whirligigs we have seen moved by electricity, and magnificently called electro magnetic *machines*, the attraction of the poles, modified by so breaking the communication and restoring it again, has in an evident manner produced the motion, but the machinery of his electric walking man is concealed by our doctor.

As it regards disease, and its cure, the fundamental of Dr. Sherwood's system is, that as the circulation of all fluids in the body depends on the degree of magnetisation, when this is but small, the circulation is impeded and clogging the small lymphatic glands, and the fluids being there exsiccated, an abnormal mass, the product of a diseased or enfeebled action, is formed.

These signs of disease, and themselves the foundation of decomposition and ulceration, are called tubercles. Now the solid and living nervous fibre is incited to increased activity by administering medicines strongly consonant to the magnetic state of the internal surface; while the effect is still farther promoted by a plaster exciting the external surface, to a different electric state from that within, and the fluids thus charged more strongly move more rapidly, and the tubercles cease to form. This seems a brief summary of the rationale of the system, the doctor proposes; upon which, with his diagnosis of tubercles, he asks the judgment of the faculty and the public. Yet the doctor, with all his candor, prevents our trying his medicines, without paying the toll due to the inventive genius, who has laid out this turnpike to Hygeia. He tells us.

"We have very successfully, during a period of more than twenty-five years, prescribed chlorine united with gold and other negative matter, (by processes which it would be both tedious and useless to describe here)." Ah, no doubt it would be tedious, but the medicines thus laboriously prepared would be useful to the tuberculous. So the doctor clearly uses this word useless in reference to the ingenious projector of the recipe. Still the truth is mighty and if the sanction of the truth is obtained for the theory, we shall not grudge a fee to the original compounder of the pill of aurum potabile.

By a sweeping generalization, the doctor passes from the mo-

tions of the microcosm to that of the universe ; and shows that electro-magnetism plays the great fiddle in the dance of the planets, and that men are sick and die as the axis of our earth wheels dizzily around. He tells us comfortingly, when the respectable finger-post of the earth's axle points to a more auspicious star than that

Red and baleful sun
That faintly twinkles,

where it now tends with air drawn mark, that man's life will again rival Methusalem's. We remember reading a volume entitled "*Exitus et Instaurationes partium mundi*;" in which is attempted to be proven, from history, tradition, geology and all sources, orthodox or not, that the axis altered every one hundred thousand years, bringing irruption of spirits, mercurial, martial or jovial as the case may be, from our neighboring planets ; these set to work making the planet as comfortable as possible for a sojourn of one hundred thousand years ; when the axis altering forces them to depart. It is therein shown that Homer, in his *Odyssey*, has described the revolutions of our planet by the wanderings of Ulysses ; while Penelope represents the chaste moon. At all events the doctor is serious, and the universal efficacy of the gold and chlorine pill, and his reasonings on disease and planetary changes and influences, are sufficiently interesting to reward the curious reader. The ardor and perseverance Dr. Sherwood has shown in the pursuit of novel and heterodox doctrines are entitled to respect, and although we cannot altogether approve of his system, we can at least say that it is presented to the world in an agreeable and attractive form by his publishers.

Old English Literature. A Valedictory Oration before the Society of Brothers in Unity. Yale College, July 6th, 1841. BY WILLIAM ERIGENA ROBINSON.

THIS address demands, on many accounts, a larger share of attention than is usually bestowed on works of its class. It is a manly straight forward production, free from vague generalities and high sounding common places, the besetting sins of college orations. It advocates a subject of importance in a manner calculated to excite the sympathies of an audience, and to communicate to them a portion of the speaker's enthusiasm. Old English literature is indeed a theme to attract the unqualified admi-

ration of a youthful mind. Mr. Robinson's passion, for it is characterised by all the ardor of a first love, and in this lecture he lifts the curtain from a corner of that enchanted land, (to most a terra incognita) which has been for him the scene of so much enjoyment. The address is an earnest and energetic plea in behalf of the old poetical writers, pointing out their excellences and pressing their paramount claim to the attention of the student over the mere imitative literature of the day. With this view he gives a rapid sketch of the progress of poetical cultivation, from the conquest to its meridian splendor, in the age of Elizabeth. The early minstrels and romances—the Robin Hood ballads—the mysteries and moralities of the infant theatre, are all noticed in a genial spirit, and their contributions to the common stock of English mind severally acknowledged, and (with a happy innovation on the usual practice) the generalities of the oration are supported by a stratum of substantial footnotes containing illustrative specimens of the authors referred to in the text.

We think Mr. Robinson's lecture likely to be productive of so much good in directing his fellow students to the inexhaustible riches of the rarely trodden paths of early English literature, that we are little disposed to be critical: we may observe, however, that a less ambitious style of composition would have shown him more deeply imbued with the spirit of his favorite writers. Many of the pleasing allusions he indulges in, have vanished before the searching eye of modern criticism. The glowing picture that he (copying from Bishop Percy) draws of the ancient minstrels, their station in society and influence in literature, must be received with great allowance; the oft quoted story of Blondel and Richard is no longer produceable in their behalf, but is dismissed from the pages of history. Nay, the very Robin Hood himself whose deeds find a commentator in our author, has his personality doubted, his very existence denied,* by the latest inquirers, who see in him the representative of some dim Northern hero of popular superstition, round whom the eddies of tradition have clustered the attributes of the resister of oppression, and the vindicator of the old Saxon race against the tyranny of the Norman conquerors.

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* The mystic character of Robin Hood is rendered probable by the entire absence of any authentic contemporary accounts, the current stories respecting his career being the growth of a recent age, and his ubiquitous connexion with supernatural appearances of "rock, grove or stream," in all parts of England, his name and favorite color, green, also indicate a common origin with Robin Good Fellow and the fairies of the popular mythology.